

March 11, 2020

Dear Families:

As you may already be aware, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer recently said Canadian schools have an important role to play in slowing the potential spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

While the risk of COVID-19 remains low in Nova Scotia, this is an evolving situation. As the situation evolves and decisions are made, the SRCE will continue to share frequent updates with our students, families, staff and school communities.

The SRCE is in close contact with public health officials through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The SRCE is following their guidance and advice to prepare and respond if COVID-19 impacts the daily operation of schools in our region. The health and safety of our students, families and staff remains our top priority. Currently, the SRCE focus is on prevention and preparation.

Health officials advise that frequent hand washing with soap and warm water remains the best defense against the spread of respiratory illnesses.

Please find attached a copy of Public Health's *Proper Hand Washing* guide that you can use for review and practice with your child (ren) at home. Teaching children about proper hand washing is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick and prevent the spread of germs to others. This guide will be posted throughout SRCE schools and work sites.

Please find included below additional important messages that you can use at home and the SRCE staff will reinforce at school:

- Frequent hand washing using soap and water;
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow, sleeve or tissue. If using a tissue, immediately place it in a waste disposal and wash your hands;
- Avoid sharing food, utensils, water bottles or drinking glasses;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth; and
- If the soap dispenser in the school bathroom is empty, please tell someone in the office.

Remember, if your child is sick, keep them home from school.

SRCE prevention includes the following:

- The SRCE custodial team is focused on disinfecting high-touch surfaces including but not limited to doorknobs, desktops, tables, handrails, vanities, sinks, washroom fixtures, stall doors and light switches.
- Schools will receive an enhanced cleaning during March Break.
- High-touch surfaces in SRCE buses will be disinfecting after morning and afternoon routes.
- A provincial Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fact Sheet is attached that contains information on actions that you can take to stay healthy and prevent the spread of respiratory illness.

Information to SRCE Families

March 11, 2020

Page 2

Find accurate and up-to-date information on COVID-19, including when to seek help at:

- Province of Nova Scotia: novascotia.ca/coronavirus/
- Government of Canada: www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html
- Public Health Agency of Canada: Coronavirus Information Line – 1-833-784-4397

Thank you for your care and attention as we continue to work together with the support of our partners to prevent the spread of respiratory illness.

Sincerely,

Paul Landry
Regional Executive Director of Education

Attachments:
Proper Hand Washing Guide
Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fact Sheet