

1 March 2020

Dear Laker Families:

Communities and school districts around the nation have been made aware of the potential danger of COVID-19 or the Coronavirus and have been working on plans to address this and other illnesses. At Glen Lake we have been monitoring communications from Federal, state and local health agencies as well as those from TBA ISD and other education based organizations throughout the state. I am hopeful that this communication will answer your questions about our response and plan moving forward.

**What are the symptoms of COVID-19 and this particular strain of a Coronavirus?**

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath—difficulty breathing

**What steps are being recommended that we should be taking at home?**

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend the standard precautions for avoiding respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (65% to 90% alcohol is recommended).
- Cover your mouth and nose with your elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth if your hands aren't clean.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick.
- Avoid sharing dishes, glasses, bedding and other household items if you're sick.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces you often touch.
- Stay home from work, school and public areas if you're sick.

**What action has the school already taken to help keep students, staff and visitors protected from the Coronavirus and other illnesses?**

Two weeks ago we brought on an additional custodian whose sole purpose was to move throughout the building during the school day to disinfect all door handles and common areas. Her vigilance and that of our custodial staff in deep cleaning all areas of the schools has made a difference. Our teachers and students have made it a regular course of action to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer provided for them throughout the day. Some school districts in northern Michigan have had to close school because they have reached or surpassed the 25% of the student body being ill and absent threshold. Over the past three weeks our average absence percentage has been 4%.

**What other cleaning efforts are being made, if any?**

We will continue to deep clean as outlined above. Additionally, if a student or staff member comes down with the flu or a respiratory infection, or if a teacher simply requests it, the custodial staff disinfects the entire classroom using an electrostatic sprayer that emits a fine atomized, chlorinated spray, kind of like a fog, that settles on most everything and dries relatively quickly. Custodial staff then wipe down everything they can in the room. This only occurs after 5:00 p.m. when the students and teachers are out of the building.

**What role does the school nurse play as a part of the district's efforts to keep an illness from spreading?**

Ashley Karczewski, our school nurse, monitors every student that comes down to the health room complaining of not feeling well for symptoms related to a virus and contacts the parents immediately if they are found to possess those symptoms. She consults with teachers who come to her with questions and is available to any of our parents who want advice or counsel on illnesses that may be affecting their child at school. Ultimately, if a parent is in doubt, they should contact their doctor for further direction.

### **What additional plans are being made?**

We are looking to reschedule an exchange trip to Germany that was scheduled to leave in a few weeks, to the end of May. We are coordinating our efforts with the host teachers in Germany and our travel agent. We will continue to monitor international trips being planned for Costa Rica in early June and to England, France and Switzerland the end of June. Decisions on those trips will be made this spring.

The Interlochen Center for the Arts, has determined that they are not allowing anyone on their campus that has traveled internationally, until they have been state side for 14 days. We are looking at a similar action as we gather more information.

If the spread of the Coronavirus were to reach Michigan and Leelanau County, and we had to close school for an extended period of time, we will look to continue the education of our students through online opportunities. There are some inherent challenges with that model, but we are working to find best answers if it becomes a reality. We will keep you informed of our plans as circumstances warrant.

### **Is there anything else we can be considering doing at home?**

If you needed to self-quarantine a member or members of your family, or there is a request from health officials to stay away from common gathering areas, having a one or two week supply of food and water and other essential family products should be considered.

We also suggest having sanitizing hand wipes, liquid or foam with you as you go to public spaces so you can quickly disinfect your hands that may come in contact with door handles or items that people handle.

### **Are there online sites that you suggest we should check out for updates or additional information?**

You can obtain additional information at the CDC website, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) for updates and at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) for their Traveler's Health Notices.

We are so grateful for the efforts of the Leelanau County and Grand Traverse County Health Departments and TBA ISD for their communications to us in assisting us and helping us better understand the challenges the COVID-19 virus is creating.

At present, there are no confirmed cases of the Coronavirus in Michigan. If an emergency occurs or community spread of the illness is approaching or in Leelanau County, we will immediately contact you through our phone emergency system, email and social media.

We will keep you informed as new, pertinent information is obtained. Please call Ms. Karczewski or an administrator if you questions or concerns that you believe we can answer for you.

Sincerely,

Jon D. Hoover, Superintendent

