Dear Parents or Guardians,

A new coronavirus called 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus was found in Wuhan, Hubei Province China. This virus has not been found in humans before. This coronavirus can lead to fever, cough and trouble breathing or shortness of breath.

What do we know: Since this virus is very new, health authorities continue to carefully watch how this virus spreads. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working hard to learn as much as possible about this new virus, so that we can better understand how it spreads and causes illness. The CDC considers this virus to be a serious public health concern. Based on current information the CDC recommends avoiding travel to China. Updated travel information related to 2019-nCoV can be found at: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/noevel-coronavirus-china

How does 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus Spread? Health experts believe the virus probably spreads from animals to humans and from person-to-person. It’s not clear yet how easily the virus spreads from person-to-person. Currently it is not a concern for the general public and is not actively circulating among New Yorkers at this time. Therefore, there is no need to cancel school or social events, there is no need for students or school staff to wear surgical masks at school.

Instead the (CDC) recommends the following prevention steps to minimize the spread of all viruses including the flu virus, which is a growing public concern this season.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer if normal handwashing is not possible.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people that are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not hands) when coughing or sneezing. Throw tissue in trash. Wash hands.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces/ objects.

Symptoms: Information to date suggests that 2019-nCoV causes mild-to-moderate illness and symptoms like the flu, including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

We encourage you to keep up to date about this emerging health issue, prevention, and treatment through these recommended resources.

CDC’s dedicated 2019-nCOV Website: https://www.cdc.gov/nCoV
NYSDOH’s dedicated 2019-nCoV Website: https://www.health.ny.gov/disease/communicable/coronavirus/

For questions please contact your local NYS DOH Novel Coronavirus hotline at 1-888-364-3065