



# Winthrop Public Schools

One Metcalf Square  
Town Hall

Winthrop, Massachusetts 02152  
617-846-5500 x 7110 Fax 617-539-0891

**Lisa A. Howard**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

February 27, 2020

Good Afternoon,

I would like to share some information with you regarding the most recent concerns raised related to the Coronavirus and the potential impact in our School Community.

With the CDC's updated recommendations, the Board of Health, School Nurse Leader, and Town partners are connecting daily to discuss any updates to our existing sickness protocols, to monitor documented cases of the flu (and other viruses should they arise) and monitor school attendance.

As you may recall, many years ago we all dealt with the H1N1 and Noro viruses in a similar situation and the community protocols are ready at hand. We will review them vis-a-vis any new recommendations and we will be updating protocols as needed. Please know we are in constant conversation with the state DPH and following recommendations from both MDPH and the CDC and will continue. All local health departments in the region, including Winthrop, continue to monitor the situation and take part in weekly conference calls and information exchanges. The state and local health depts have the legal authority to quarantine, if and when necessary. The schools will continue to follow cleaning schedules including disinfecting and deep cleaning schedules as warranted.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has shared guidance for school administrators and school health personnel regarding the new coronavirus, known as COVID-19. As of this writing, Massachusetts has one confirmed case of COVID-19 and the risk to our residents remains low. In the US, there are only 53 cases confirmed. Only one of these cases was confirmed to be passed through human contact. At the same time, the risk for the influenza virus remains high. It is important to note that residents are much more likely to become sick with a cold or the flu than to be exposed to COVID-19. The guidance letter sent to all schools is available at the DPH website at: [www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus](http://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus). Here is a useful fact sheet in many languages to assist you in learning about this virus: <https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19#-printable-fact-sheets->

Trends with the coronavirus currently indicate that the primary group hit hardest by the virus are males 50+ with existing chronic conditions. Some helpful reminders for adults and students: and remind you that you should wash your hands regularly for the length of time that it takes to sing the alphabet twice! Cover your mouth if you cough and avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose with your hands. Families, please keep your sick children out of school--students should be fever free for 24 hours prior to coming back to school. Winthrop Public Schools staff will help all students make up missed work and instruction.

**Reminders**

For up-to-date information regarding the 2019 novel Coronavirus, please visit the DPH COVID-19 web site at [www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus](http://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus) More detailed information and additional guidance is available from the CDC at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov)

For questions regarding the information contained in the links above, please contact the DPH Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences at (617) 983-6800.

Respectfully,

*Lisa A. Howard*

Lisa A. Howard, M.Ed

*“The Winthrop Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, gender identity, disability, or homelessness for employment, participation in, admission/access to, or operation and administration of any educational program or activity in the School District”*

