



Statement on the Coronavirus (COVID-19)
March 11, 2020

In everything we do, the safety of our students and staff is our top concern. We want to share an important message about the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). As you know, the virus is spreading to many parts of the world beyond its origins in China including the United States and Ohio. Please know that, as we do in all health-related cases, we are working closely with our local health departments. We also receive additional guidance from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), the Governor's Office, the Ohio Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In keeping with advice and recommendations regarding COVID-19 from Governor DeWine, the Ohio Department of Health, and many of our local health departments, our schools will remain open at this time.* We will be cancelling or postponing all out of state trips and all field trips until further notice. We will evaluate the situation every two weeks or sooner if needed, but we are anticipating that this will be in effect at least through Easter break. Large indoor student performances and events involving the community will be postponed as well, and each school will be analyzing the risks in making these decisions for their individual circumstances. Outdoor sporting events may continue. Indoor sporting events will be limited to players and their families.

While schools will remain open now, parents should also begin planning for the potential that they may need to stay home with their children or find alternate child care solutions. Our schools are also planning for that possibility.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and one which we are monitoring closely. Our schools will keep parents informed with up-to-date information through their regular means of communication with parents. Please be patient with school administrators, as this is an ever-evolving time for them as well, and they are working to prepare and respond as quickly as possible.

Our schools have emergency operation plans in place to deal with large-scale illness outbreaks, including procedures for excluding ill students and staff, cancellation of activities and mass gatherings, and, if necessary, school closure. We regularly work with our local health departments when there is a case or outbreak of disease for guidance on recommendation of student(s) exclusion and/or school closure.

Many of our schools are currently experiencing outbreaks of the flu, so normal preventative measures are already in place.

- Staff is working closely with students to encourage best hygiene practices
- Staff and administration is cognizant of building cleanliness
- Administrators are reviewing safety plans
- Communication lines are constant and continual between our administration, the appropriate health agencies, and the schools

At home, there are steps your family can take to prevent the spread of illness which has been shared with us by a number of health agencies.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; dry hands with a clean towel or air dry.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are unavailable.
- Cover your mouth with a tissue or a sleeve when sneezing or coughing.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when sick and do not return to school until you have been fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours.
- As much as possible, avoid contact with people who are sick.

- Experts recommend that all persons over the age of 6 months receive an annual influenza vaccine. While there is no vaccine for the coronavirus, guarding against the flu can keep the immune system stronger. Flu vaccinations are still available.
- Parents are asked to self-report if a family/ student travels out of the country over spring break. That student may be asked to adhere to a two-week quarantine from school before returning. School work would be provided during that period.

Below are direct links to some trusted resources.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>
- Ohio Department of Health: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/Novel-Coronavirus/Resources-for-the-Public/>
- Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Hotline: 1-833-4-ASK-ODH, Open seven days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Ohio Website: www.coronavirus.ohio.gov

Families should also feel free to contact your school if you have any questions about our response to illness outbreak. We hope each of our families and the members of our staff will remain safe and healthy and that all of you will join us in prayer for all those affected by the Coronavirus and other illnesses.

*Please note that Governor DeWine's advice for universities is different than the advice for K-12 schools.

Prayer for the Coronavirus

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus Christ, heal us.

Amen.

--- Prayer by **Kerry Weber**, [America Magazine](#)