

February 28, 2020

Dear Education Partner,

You are likely aware of the coronavirus, or COVID-19, that has become prevalent in other countries around the world. I'd like to provide an update of what has been done to prepare, in the event an outbreak occurs in Pennsylvania, and where you can access additional information.

Earlier this month, the state Department of Health (DOH) activated the Health Emergency Operations Center to streamline cross sector coordination. DOH also continues to update factsheets and information about the virus on its website. You can find the most current information for schools by visiting DOH's [Coronavirus website](#) or by connecting through [PDE's website](#) (under the "Schools" tab).

The best way to prepare for an outbreak in Pennsylvania continues to be ensuring you and your education community are practicing good hygiene, including washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, keeping surfaces clean, and encouraging people to stay home if they are sick.

As school leaders you should also take the opportunity to review your existing pandemic plan, and work with local health and emergency officials to update those plans to address a potential virus outbreak in your community.

Additional resources to aid in your planning can be found below.

- [Sample Checklist for Pandemic Influenza \(PEMA\)](#)
- [Get Your School Ready for Pandemic Flu \(CDC\)](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(CDC\)](#)
- [Coronavirus Resource Website \(DOH\)](#)
- [All-Hazards Toolkit \(PEMA\)](#)

Please note that school nurses, who are under the jurisdiction of DOH, will receive school health information directly from DOH as it becomes available. I will forward this information to you as the Department receives it.

Also, please remember to include any on-site educational partners (e.g., early childhood providers, community partners, etc.) in development and communication efforts related to your plan.

The Department of Education will continue to coordinate with DOH and others to ensure that Pennsylvania is prepared should there be an outbreak of COVID-19 here. I encourage you to check DOH's website regularly for the most up-to-date information and to work with your local officials to ensure your community has a plan suited to meet your needs.

We are in the process of developing additional guidance to address topics we know you will be considering as you move forward in your planning. Look for weekly updates for this information as it becomes available.

Pedro Rivera, Secretary of Education