

# Science Language & Arts

March 3, 2020

Dear SLA families,

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak evolves, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated its interim guidance to schools and businesses, asking them to prepare for the possibility of community-level outbreaks. Per Governor Cuomo's announcement this morning, there are now two confirmed cases of COVID-19 in New York City at this time, and there is evidence of community transmission in New York City. City and State officials are monitoring this situation closely.

We want to assure you that we are taking this matter very seriously. As this situation unfolds, SLA will work closely with the relevant city agencies on all preventative and responsive measures. The NYC Health Department is vigilantly preparing for all possible scenarios, and we will continue to monitor and communicate about any possible impact to our school community.

**There are no plans to close schools at this time.** This is an extreme measure that can be disruptive to day-to-day life, and the decision to implement will be at the direction of public health experts.

In the meantime, please monitor news and resources released by the NYC Department of Health, the New York State Department of Health, the CDC, and WHO.

For quick reference:

[NYC Department of Health](#)

[NY State Department of Health](#)

[Centers for Disease Control](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

Because COVID-19 has become a frequent topic of discussion in our homes and community, we encourage you to read WHO's document on [helping children cope with stress](#).

In line with the guidance from the NYC Department of Health and the CDC, SLA's current response continues to be directed toward illness prevention. We encourage our students, families and staff to follow the general illness prevention practices outlined below. Our staff, faculty and facilities team are working diligently to maintain a clean and safe environment throughout the

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building. We have increased the frequency of cleaning surfaces, including door knobs, shared materials, the elevator panel and other common areas.

## General Illness Prevention Practices:

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds -- **please ensure you wash your hands when arriving at school.**

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash (to avoid leaving germs on your hands)
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Get your flu shot – it's never too late
- Stay home if you're feeling sick. Call your doctor and let them know your symptoms and travel history.

**As a further precaution, we ask any individual who has recently traveled from affected regions of the world to wait 14 days before returning to school.**

If you have specific questions, please contact me at any time. As always, the safety of our community is our top priority, and we will continue to update you with any new developments.

Warm regards,  
Kate Johnstone, Parent Coordinator  
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