



# MT. VERNON

COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

*“Engage, Educate, and Empower Today’s Students”*

March 12, 2020

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation (MVCSC) holds our student and staff health and safety as our number one priority. The Greenfield Daily Reporter newspaper has reported a jail employee in Hancock County has been diagnosed with the coronavirus (COVID-19). **There are currently no cases of COVID-19 in any MVCSC school.**

MVCSC is communicating regularly with the Hancock County Health Department, as well as the Indiana State Health Department and is following their guidance. MVCSC has been working diligently to plan ahead and is closely monitoring the Indiana State Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) websites for reliable updates and guidance.

With the recent COVID-19 cases in Indiana, MVCSC is taking additional health and cleaning precautions to keep students and staff healthy that we will explain below.

Noteworthy actions that we will be implementing include the following (details below):

- ❖ MVCSC will be closing all buildings for all activities during the 2nd week of spring break.
- ❖ Students and staff traveling to countries labeled as a [CDC Designated "Widespread Sustained" \(level 3\) country](#), or are taking a cruise, are asked to self-quarantine for 14 days upon their return.
- ❖ In the event of a COVID-19 diagnosis in our district, we will inform our parents and staff immediately. Because of privacy laws, MVCSC has been legally advised not to share any details, which would include the name of the school(s) that had the diagnosis.

*We recognize that this is a fluid situation with new information coming in on a regular basis. Actions are being determined on a daily basis and can change quickly. We will maintain up-to-date information on our website as this situation evolves.*

Here are some of the extra measures that a wide variety of MVCSC staff (teachers, custodians, bus drivers, instructional assistants, health room assistants, etc.) are taking to maintain a healthy educational environment throughout this period of concern:

- Continually teaching good hygiene to students - Parents are encouraged to reinforce:
  - Wash hands with soap for 20 seconds
  - Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or coughing into elbow
  - Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
  - Instead of shaking hands or high fives, knuckle-bump or elbow-bump
  - Remain at home if there are any symptoms of feeling sick
- Hand sanitizer in every room as supplies allow
- Disinfecting/sterilizing bus seats and high-touch objects on buses
  - Bus drivers have been allowed over-time to thoroughly clean their buses
- Continuing to disinfect/sterilize food prep areas and cafeterias
  - Cafeteria staff have been allowed over-time for any extra cleaning needed
- Staff will continue to disinfect/sterilize high-touch areas daily such as doorknobs, light switches, desks/tables, water fountains, etc.
- MVCSC Health Services has a plan to help screen and identify students with virus possible symptoms
- Technology staff is cleaning the shared Chromebooks, Lobby Guard, and computer labs. To clean your student's Chromebook, use alcohol-based wipes without bleach.
- In an effort for all germs/viruses to expire, MVCSC will be closing all buildings to all staff and students the second week of Spring Break (March 20 at 5 p.m. through Monday, March 30 at 5 a.m.) Essential personnel (custodians and maintenance) will work on March 23 and 24 only.

New viruses cause concern and heightened interest, but as the CDC states, older people and those with chronic medical conditions or compromised health symptoms are the people most at risk. The best way to prevent any illness is to practice good hygiene as shared above. Parents/guardians are asked to keep children home if they show any symptoms of being sick. Please do not send your child into school for the purpose of having the health room assistant assess your child.

### **What about Mt. Vernon families who are traveling?**

MVCSC is expecting families that are traveling to review the CDC website's watch list and follow their travel advice. On their website, the CDC shares that the risk of infection on an airplane is low. MVCSC requires that all staff and students traveling on a cruise or to a **CDC Designated "Widespread Sustained" (level 3) country** self-report to the school principal via email, and self-quarantine themselves per CDC's recommendation.

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Preschool Coordinator - [elizabeth.flynn@mvcsc.k12.in.us](mailto:elizabeth.flynn@mvcsc.k12.in.us)

### **What is our attendance policy during this time?**

Students and staff with a principal verification for the self-quarantine will be held harmless for their attendance. Those who choose to stay home without a principal's verification for the absence will be subject to the regular attendance policy. The principal will approve/verify a self-quarantine absence for those traveling to/from a **CDC Designated "Widespread Sustained" (level 3) country** or those who come back from a cruise.

### **What happens if the Hancock County Health Department advises MVCSC to close schools due to a verified COVID-19 infection?**

MVCSC will follow the Health Department's guidance and we will implement eLearning day(s) as needed. Please remember, should this situation arise, we are prohibited from sharing health information about students or staff. Please do not engage in speculation, online or in person, about neighbors or classmates. **In the event of a COVID-19 diagnosis in our district, we will inform our parents and staff immediately. Because of privacy laws, MVCSC has been legally advised not to share any information, which includes the name of the school(s) that had the diagnosis.**

### **What about extracurricular activities?**

At this time, we are not canceling any activities other than any activities during the second week of Spring Break, but as we shared above, we are monitoring developments daily, if not hourly.

### **How should I talk to my children about COVID-19?**

There are many resources that are available to help guide your discussion. Here is a [guide from the National Association of School Psychologists](#).

This is a very fluid situation, and we will continue to communicate with our families and update our website page regularly. The leaders at MVCSC are discussing and preparing for a variety of situations that may or may not arise. Some of the considerations being discussed are extracurricular activities, food service, special education services, and of course providing quality instruction/learning environment through eLearning.

Although at this point MVCSC does not foresee closures after Spring Break, MVCSC is encouraging families to begin conversations about what your family plan will be in the event of an extended school closure with eLearning in place. All students should be bringing their devices, chargers, and any necessary books/materials home daily.

This is an unusual situation, but we are confident that working together will help to keep our staff and students healthy. Thank you for your partnership and support.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jack Parker  
MVCSC Superintendent