

Dear Hancock County School District families,

With increased public attention on COVID-19 (Coronavirus), it is important to reassure you that Hancock County School District is doing everything possible to protect the health of our students and staff. We continue to stay on top of the latest developments so we can better prepare and respond should this new virus is detected in our community.

### **WHAT WE ARE DOING:**

Hancock County School District remains diligent in our efforts to reduce the risks of illnesses for students and staff. These steps include:

- Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces and objects.
- Reminding students to cover their mouth with their arm or tissues when sneezing or coughing.
- Encouraging students to wash their hands regularly with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer.
- Sending students home if they are sick.
- Educating the public on the risks and prevention measures.
- Keeping in close contact with the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, and monitoring updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Taking guidance from the Mississippi Department of Education.

### **HOW YOU CAN HELP:**

While we are taking these extra measures to reduce the risk of spreading illness, we are also urging families to take the same precautions that are recommended during the cold and flu season. These steps include:

- Keeping your child home if he/she has flu-like symptoms, which include: fever, muscle aches and chills, headache, sore throat, extreme tiredness, diarrhea and vomiting.
- Keeping children home until they are fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.
- Washing hands with soap and water often for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer.
- Reminding your children to avoid touching their mouth, nose, and eyes to prevent the spread of germs.
- Encouraging children to stop handshaking.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces and objects.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.

With the situation regarding coronavirus changing daily, we will continue to work closely with our partner agencies to monitor new information and share those updates with our school community. We encourage our families to follow directives, like travel restrictions, from the World Health Organization, CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/>, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, and Hancock County Emergency Management Agency. This is also a good time to make household preparations, including plans for child care and transportation, should there be a potential disruption to school schedules in the future.

The Mississippi State Department of Health is answering questions that you may have at the new **COVID-19 hotline, 877-978-6453**. You can check with the agency during regular business hours, 8:00am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday. The MSDH website is also a primary resource for coronavirus information: 24/7: <http://HealthyMS.com/covid-19>.

At times like this, we are especially grateful for the cooperation and support from our HCSD community. Thank you for working with us to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for our students and staff!