Attachment A

Superintendents Memo No. 032-20

February 7, 2020

FROM: M. Norman Oliver, MD, MA Virginia State Health Commissioner

# SUBJECT: Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus (termed “2019-nCoV”). A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus strain that has not been previously found in people. On January 21, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced the first confirmed case in the United States in a traveler returning from Wuhan, China.

The CDC considers the immediate risk of 2019-nCoV infection to the general American public low at this time. The vast majority of cases have occurred in China. A small number of cases have been confirmed in the United States, but 2019-nCoV is not spreading in the community.

Person-to-person spread of the virus is occurring in China. At this time, it is unclear how easily or sustainably this virus is spreading between people. We also are unsure of how severe this new virus will be. The latest situation summary updates are available on the CDC's website at [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

Given their congregate setting and number of contacts, schools should be prepared to meet the challenges the novel coronavirus may create. School division leadership should review methods of communicating with parents quickly and effectively. Now is the time for school personnel to review their infection control plans and make revisions as needed. Ongoing communication among school division officials, local health department officials, and community leaders should already be in place.

School health staff may assist in the following ways.

* If you identify a potentially affected student, advise them to call their health care provider (PCP, ED, urgent care) for guidance.
* Work with students who are self-isolating to ensure absences are excused and stigma is minimized.
* If school officials have questions, they should reach out to their [local health department](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/health-department-locator/) for guidance.

The CDC and VDH will update the public as soon as new information is available. Using these sources will ensure you have accurate information. You should continue to monitor this fluid situation by accessing the latest information on the VDH Novel Coronavirus web page at [www.vdh.Virginia.gov/coronavirus](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus) for the most up-to-date information.

The following resources are provided for your information:

* CDC Novel Coronavirus website: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
* VDH Fact Sheet: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/epidemiology-fact-sheets/coronaviruses/>.
* For questions, email us at Respiratory@vdh.Virginia.gov.

Thank you for your continued partnership in protecting the health of the Commonwealth’s children as they attend your schools.