



THE SCHOOLS of Guntersville

March 12, 2020

Dear Parents & Guardians:

We want to make you aware our school system is closely monitoring reports and information regarding growing concerns about the spread of the Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19. Understandably, it is an issue for which we are all concerned and are following closely. As there are a lot of unknowns and information is constantly changing, we acknowledge it is too early to speculate on all the "what if's." Hopefully, this communication can make it clear as to what we do know and what families can do to help.

We acknowledge there is a lot we do not know at this time. Information is moving quickly. Situations are constantly evolving. If a decision is made to change school operations, it would be done so in coordination with governmental agencies. We are unable to provide specifics of how we would operate schools in the event of a recommended closure due to the many factors that could influence those decisions such as the condition of staff, resources at homes and direction from appropriate agencies.

We are also looking for guidance from governmental agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), and the Alabama State Department of Education relative to this serious matter.

At this time, our schools are operating as normal. Still, understanding the unique nature of the current situation, we will honor parents' decisions about their child's participation concerning trips. Students will not be penalized for those decisions. We will continue to monitor information and make appropriate decisions on future school-sponsored trips.

The flu, which has some similarity to the Coronavirus, remains an annual concern for our schools. Every flu season, our teachers, school nurses and staff encourage frequent handwashing, covering every cough or sneeze and clean classroom tables/surfaces frequently. Custodial staff continually sanitize classrooms and common areas, and our transportation staff is disinfecting buses daily.

While schools have a role in this rapidly changing situation, we also look to our community to share in the responsibility to keep our children and community healthy. If families are traveling to affected areas, we ask they follow guidance given by local, state, and federal officials as to recommended precautions before returning to school. Families with concerns about travel plans over Spring Break should maintain communication with their principal.

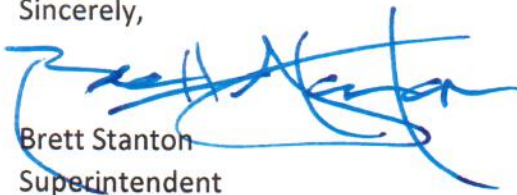
Based on current information, health officials are recommending local communities and schools take the same steps to protect against the Coronavirus that help prevent the spread of everyday illnesses like the common cold or flu:

- Stay home when sick.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover the mouth and nose with the inside of the elbow when sneezing or coughing.
- Wash hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing the nose.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects such as toys and doorknobs.

We ask for your patience and understanding as we are all working with the best of intentions and with available information we have at this time. We will provide updates as necessary via our mass phone communication system and email blasts.

In advance, thanks for your understanding regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Brett Stanton
Superintendent