

Program

Alex LeMay, Middle School Science Teacher, presented, “Talking to Kids about Coronavirus”.

Suggested link: Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Map

Key points – get educated, social distancing, wash hands.

Questions and answers with responses provided by Dr. Kathy Sanders and Ms. Alex LeMay.

- 1. Questions:** *Why is it not better to tell the public that 100% people will get this virus or be exposed to it instead of the way it is currently being described or explained?*

Response: The science shows that generally it takes 3 to 5 days for immune system to react to the old viruses. With this new virus, there are not immunities in the system and no vaccines available yet. Naturally, it takes time to build up responses and immunities. So, it is important to not overwhelm the healthcare system and buy more time to spread out the impact over time. It is best for everyone to be vigilant.
- 2. Questions:** *For those who travel a lot, should people stay away from people in high risk categories?*

Response: Yes, stay away from loved ones and others who have immunity issues. You do not want to put them at risk and again, overwhelm the hospital system. Scientists and doctors are trying to flatten the curve and we can help them by heading CDC guidance and best practices.
- 3. Questions:** *Why has it been hard to get testing?*

Response: Although it is relatively easy to get the genetic code, scientists/doctors still had to wait to get the needed data. Nothing could be done until the Federal government/CDC provided the clearance which has recently been given/provided.

Presentation from Mr. Hawks about DSA response to Coronavirus.

He shared that decisions to close the schools is a state-level decision to make sure there is consistency across the state so that their actions implemented help to flatten the spread curve.

- 1. Question:** *What cleaning/sanitizing/disinfecting products can be used by the schools? What is the reason behind why some products are not allowed by DPS? What items can families donate to assist the school?*

Response: Chemicals should be toxin-free and “green.” DPS uses Diversey products. The primary disinfectant is Alpha HP. The state does not provide a list of “approved products.” However, the expectations are that chemicals are toxin-free. Bleach is a known toxin and allergen. Typically, bleach is not used in commercial settings (schools, hotels, etc.). Most Lysol products without a bleach additive are generally accepted. It is never advisable to use aerosol products of any kind because they have the potential to cause problems for anyone with respiratory issues.
- 2. Question:** *What advice to give parents for kids with immunity issues?*

Response: Mr. Hawks said that must be addressed with their medical practitioners.

3. **Question:** *If a student is concerned about their own immunity and vulnerability (have a compromised system), are students who want to minimize their risk, will it be considered and excused absence and what is the process to get it approved as excused?*

Response: Mr. Hawks said to submit a note through the process (submitted within three days). Students do not need a note from doctor.

4. **Question:** *What is the impact on exam exemptions?*

Response: Mr. Hawks shared that Board will likely say that if a student has already met the requirements for exam exemptions, moving forward, the Coronavirus will not impact that status.

5. **Question:** *How much information does the school require to justify a note in previous question?*

Response: Mr. Hawks shared that just providing the name and that student was not in school or was sick is sufficient. When no written documentation is provided is when the absence is not excused.

6. **Question:** *What happens if school is closed? How will instruction be provided?*

Response: Mr. Hawks said that it is not known at this time if schools will be closed. However, the administration, faculty and staff are trying to prepare in the event that school is closed. They are discussing ways to make instruction accessible to everyone regardless if families have access to internet or not. They are doing everything they can deal with the situation.

Response: Ms. LeMay mentioned that some platforms being considered are Google Classroom. Parents and students are requested to check the school's website/teacher link.

7. **Question:** *Is testing going to be available online?*

Response: Mr. Hawks said that more information will be provided about end of year testing. Course tests and quizzes will be available online through Google Classroom.

8. **Question:** *Will DPS increase the number of nurses?*

Response: Mr. Hawks said that is a state issue and current nurses will be shared.

9. **Question:** *Is hot water, soap, and paper towels provided at school?*

Response: Mr. Hawks said hot water is generally not available. Soap and paper towels are available. He shared that custodial staff will check bathrooms more regularly.

Response: Dr. Sanders emphasized that quality washing is more important than water temperature.

10. **Question:** *What training has custodial staff received?*

Response: Mr. Hawks said that custodians are in the process of being trained to disinfect the school campus.

- 11. Question:** Will schedules allow students to wash hands before lunch?
Response: Mr. Hawks said students will be given time to wash hands in between classes, if they choose (high school). Middle school students are taken as a group.
- 12. Question:** *What is being done to prevent bullying?*
Response: Mr. Hawks bullying is not tolerated. They are dealing with this issue directly and swiftly.
- 13. Question:** *Are science teachers coordinating to make sure students have good information?*
Response: Ms. LeMay shared that teachers are working together to make sure that they are addressing the matter either directly through the curriculum or in response to student questions. She encourages students to ask teachers questions.
Response: Mr. Hawks emphasized that everyone should seek out facts to make sure get the appropriate information.
- 14. Question:** *Will students with fever be sent home? Is there a policy on “fever-free”?*
Response: Mr. Hawks said that there is no “fever-free” policy. He stated that students with fevers should not be in school.
- 15. Question:** *Is it the position of the DPS to follow the state or will they make certain local decisions?*
Response: Mr. Hawks said that it is the Board’s decision. The Superintendent has scheduled a press conference for March 12th at 2:00 pm. He shared that March 12th is the last day for school athletics.
- 16. Question:** *Graduation and prom?*
Response: Mr. Hawks shared that since projections only go through middle of April. Will have to wait to see how things develop before other decisions are made.
- 17. Comment:** *Shared that racist comments and bullying are happening.*
Response: Mr. Hawks shared that they will look into this issue.
- 18. Question:** *Is school going to be closed on Monday?*
Response: Mr. Hawks shared to wait to see it on the official DPS website.