



## Public Health

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February 14, 2020

To whom it may concern,

In light of the current flu season, as well as special concerns about the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV/ COVID-19) and hepatitis A, I would like to take the opportunity to emphasize the importance of handwashing in preventing disease and remaining healthy.

Everyone should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after bathroom visits and before handling food or eating. Hand sanitizers are **not** as effective, although students and staff can use non-alcohol based hand sanitizers if they do not have access to soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are good at killing bacteria, but non-alcohol based hand sanitizers are better at killing viruses such as influenza and hepatitis A. I would like to emphasize that the risk of hepatitis A and coronavirus to students and staff is low at this time.

I would also like to encourage visiting the Centers for Disease Control Prevention's [Handwashing webpage](#) to access a variety of resources that are free to download, print and distribute to educate and encourage proper handwashing.

Your assistance in encouraging proper handwashing is a valuable component of efforts to effectively protect students, staff and the community from the spread of disease. If you have any questions, please call our Communicable Disease Section at (800) 722-4794, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thank you for your collaboration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Erin Gustafson, MD, MPH".

Erin Gustafson, MD, MPH  
San Bernardino County Assistant Health Officer

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