

March 10, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians;

We have been continuing to work closely with The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), and our local health agencies for guidance regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

As the Executive Director of NECCS, my team and I are meeting and will continue to collaborate, share information, and plan. Our school has taken several steps to ensure the health and safety of our school community, including encouraging hand hygiene, frequent disinfecting of facilities, and communicating routinely with our school nurse and local public health departments. The NJDOH guidance identifies school closure as a potential strategy to limit transmission within a community. To be clear, the flexibility to count a day on which public school facilities are closed toward the state statutory 180-day requirement applies strictly to public health-related school closures and not to any other type of closure or other days on which public school facilities are not made available. Therefore, our school is working diligently to develop school closure preparedness plans so our teachers may deliver educational services through a variety of resources, including but not limited to:

- Web-based distance learning
- On-line materials (digital textbooks) and resources (websites)
- On-line learning platforms (Google)
- Flipped classroom (recorded lessons)
- Hard copy packets

For effective communication and educational services to be possible, it is imperative that we have current information on every family. Please make sure that you have access to your child's Class Dojo, and that we have a working phone number and email address for you. We are providing a form with this letter showing the information currently in our system. Please note changes so we may update our records as needed. We are also sending a survey to determine access to internet and web-based educational tools. Please be sure to complete and return no later than **Thursday, March 12**.

In the meantime, the following best practices continue to help minimize the spread of viruses, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.



**Learning for all.**

- ❑ Keep children home when they are sick, especially if they present with fever (above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or 37.7 C). Children should be fever-free (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- ❑ Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- ❑ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- ❑ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- ❑ If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.

Prior to travel, it's important to consider the potential risks that may be involved in visiting your destinations. If you or an immediate family member are traveling to areas with sustained or widespread transmission, you must contact your child's school nurse prior to returning to school. Please review the most affected geographic areas at the link below:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/>

The NJDOH has also established a hotline (1-800-222-1222) to answer questions about COVID-19. Operated by the Poison Information and Education System, the 24-hour public hotline is staffed with trained healthcare professionals and can accommodate callers in multiple languages.

If you would like additional information from your local health agency, please review below:

<https://npin.cdc.gov/organization/city-newark-department-health-and-community-wellness>

The health and safety of our entire school community remains our top priority, and we will continue to work cooperatively as we move forward. Thank you for your continued support.

Regards,

Katherine V. Martinez