Coronavirus Update - March 12, 2020

Dear EWRSD Families,

I am reaching out to provide an update regarding our current status as a school district regarding COVID-19.

I will begin by thanking all of you for your ongoing commitment, patience, and flexibility. As this situation continues to evolve, it is important that we keep the lines of communication open and offer support to one another. I realize this is a challenge for all of us, and I appreciate your resilience during this difficult time.

Here are the latest updates for the EWRSD:

**DISTRICT STATUS: Cases, Reporting, Travel, Tests, Closure**

- As of today, March 12, 2020. There are no confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 in the EWRSD. I encourage students to stay at home if they are ill, have a fever, or persistent cough.
- As the coronavirus continues to develop in New Jersey, it is natural for us to become aware of suspected situations that may be related to the virus. If this occurs, please share that information with your school’s principal or nurse in confidence. I encourage us all to rely on factual information and limit the spreading of rumors.
- Continue to notify the district if you or a person you reside with travels to a country outside of the US. Please refer to the [CDC travel page](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/) for up to date information.
- Please note the EWRSD is not in a position to test individuals for COVID-19. That will be determined via an individual's healthcare provider, and/or the NJ Department of Health.
- Any school or district closure will be implemented in consultation with or by directive of the New Jersey Department of Health (via the health officer assigned to our municipalities).

**FACILITIES/EVENTS:**

- Our custodial team has continued to increase the frequency of disinfecting frequently touched areas/objects. In addition, inspectors from the local health department visited our district this week and reaffirmed the effectiveness of our EPA approved cleaning products.
- Kidcare is an extension of the school district and is following the same sanitation procedures.
- We are currently reviewing all upcoming field trips and large group events. You should be prepared for certain events to be rescheduled when possible, or canceled. Especially,
large scale, indoor events.

REMOTE LEARNING:

- The New Jersey Department of Education has permitted schools to implement a Home Instruction provision for the entire school district if schools need to close for a period of time due to COVID-19. Activating this “Remote Learning” contingency plan will enable districts to count these days towards the state’s required 180-day minimum. This means the days students are not in school, due to a New Jersey Department of Health recommended closing will not have to be made up upon return. Therefore, all districts in NJ are in the process of developing contingency plans, which must include the following components:
  - Written directive from DOH or local health agency ordering closure
  - Equitable access to services for all students
  - Address the provision of appropriate education for Special Education students
  - Provision of school nutrition benefits for eligible students

- Building administrators, supervisors, and teachers have already started to develop meaningful learning plans/activities that students will complete in the event that our schools are closed and we need to implement “remote learning”. Some of the considerations associated with the district’s remote learning plan are as follows:
  - Students will be assigned approximately 2-4 hours of work each day.
  - Students should be able to complete the work independently.
  - Teachers should be available for a period of time (4 hours) each day to address questions and provide guidance if needed. This can occur via email, Genesis, Google Classroom, etc.
  - Teachers should be mindful of students who may not have access to technology or Wifi when developing assignments.

- In the event we need to close schools and activate Remote Learning, several buildings will be open for students to access breakfast and lunch (8:00-12:00). Students can select the building closest to their residence for breakfast/lunch. These breakfast/lunch items will only be grab and go. Students will not be permitted to sit and eat within the school.

- As we prepare for the possibility of Remote Learning, I encourage you to review your login information associated with the Genesis Parent Portal. Genesis will serve as an option for you to access information related to your child’s classes, which may include updates from teachers. Please click here for additional information.
REMINDERS/RESOURCES:
Please continue to practice the following steps to prevent illness. Please click here for additional information.

● Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
● Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
● Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
● Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash.
● Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
● Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

As a district, we continue to remain in close and constant communication with the New Jersey Department of Health and the New Jersey Department of Education. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions or check the district's Coronavirus Update page for updates and credible resources.

Stay well.

Mark Daniels
Superintendent of Schools