

# SCITUATE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

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March 12, 2020

Dear Members of the Scituate Educational Community,

School Superintendents across the state have been participating in statewide conference calls with Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health, the Rhode Island Department of Education and other state agencies. I would like to share with you, information from the conference call regarding the COVID-19 virus and how the district is responding. It was reported that there were two confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus in the State of Rhode Island. At this time there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the Scituate School Department.

Addressing the issue of children in Kindergarten through Grade 12, Gov. Raimondo and Health Department Director, Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott, said they are working with the Rhode Island Department of Education on a continuing basis regarding policy. But as of Wednesday evening, there were no plans to close schools.

That rationale, the leaders said, is based on three primary factors: globally, evidence shows children have the lowest risk of contracting COVID-19; many children receive meals at schools and might go lacking were classes canceled; and if canceled, some children would be left in the care of older adults such as grandparents, who are at higher risk of coronavirus.

The Department of Education is "issuing additional guidance for school leadership" including "recommendations on school assemblies, cleaning schedules, ways to ensure social distancing in schools, and visitation policies," according to the Health Department.

However, Gov. Raimondo on Wednesday, advised Rhode Islanders not to attend or organize events, indoors or out, with more than 250 people of any age for the next two weeks. Further she asked that individuals keep a distance of six feet between themselves and others. Please note however, that the Governor's office stated, "the recommendation does not pertain to the normal school day for students and workplaces, as long as 250 or more people are not closely concentrated".

For those reasons, the Scituate School Department has responded to the guidance by initiating some parameters around three events scheduled at the high school over the next couple of weeks:

1. The Scituate Girls' basketball game is scheduled at home this evening. We are asking that only **immediate family members** of basketball players attend the game. In addition, only 50 Scituate High School students and staff members (non-family members) will be admitted to the game who are asked to sign up in the high school office before 2:00 PM today. Finally, we ask that older adults, people with underlying health conditions, or people who are feeling ill please consider **not attending tonight's game**. Administration in conjunction with the Scituate Police Department will be counting fans as they walk into the Scituate High School Gymnasium and will turn away all fans after we reach 250.

The Scituate School Department does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion, national origin, color, creed, political affiliation or disability in any of its educational programs and activities, and in employment and application for employment, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1965, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and other federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Equal Employment Officer, P.O. Box 188, North Scituate, Rhode Island 02857. Telephone: (401) 647-4100; Email: [EEO@ScituateSchoolsRI.net](mailto:EEO@ScituateSchoolsRI.net). You may also direct inquiries directly to: Office for Civil Rights (Boston Office), U.S. Department of Education, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921, Telephone: (617) 289-0111; Facsimile: (617) 289-0150; Email: [OCR.Boston@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Boston@ed.gov). If you require an accommodation to attend a meeting or program at a school, call the Equal Employment Officer at least two business days in advance of the meeting or program.

2. Our Scituate High School Drama Performance (Door to Door) is still on for Friday, March 13th at 7:00 PM in the High School Auditorium. We expect a smaller audience at this event, but will still count attendees and limit the audience members to 250. We ask that patrons sit in every other seat during the performance. Again, we ask that older adults or those with underlying health conditions limit their risk and that to the community by remaining at home.
3. In addition, the Scituate High School Pops Concert, **scheduled for Wednesday, March 18th is postponed**. A new concert date will be advertised as we gain more information released from the RI Department of Health and the Governor's office
4. We will do a complete inventory of all events scheduled within the next two weeks at all levels tomorrow morning and will share new information about elementary and middle school events that are impacted. Please check our website for those updates.
5. We have suspended our "High Five Fridays" for at least the next two weeks.

Please note that the Governor's office stated, "the recommendation does not pertain to the normal school day for students and workplaces, as long as 250 or more people are not closely concentrated"

Additionally, on a case by case basis, building administrators will work with parents on attendance policy flexibility. Please call your building principal if you have questions.

The district is developing an alternate educational plan in the event of a mandated school closure. This plan could include virtual instruction at the middle and high schools, along with a plan for the elementary school to include instructional packets. We will work with teachers and administration to construct and implement that plan and share it with parents as soon as details are available.

Please feel free to call me and visit the sites listed below if you have any further questions. Thank you.

<https://health.ri.gov/>

[Rhode Island Department of Health, COVID-19 page](#)

[US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19 page](#)

[World Health Organization, COVID-19 page](#)

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