

Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District

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Dear HWRSD Community,

We are writing to our families and staff as follow up to our letter of February 27th ([Important Health Update](#)). As you may be aware, Governor Charlie Baker has declared a state of emergency so that Massachusetts can take measures to address the impacts of the Novel Coronavirus (COVIS-19). We are continuing to closely monitor any implications for our schools and our communities, in consultation with our local Boards of Health and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. There is no immediate reason to anticipate school closures, but we are developing contingency preparations if that need should arise, or if adjustments are made in the scheduling of school activities and events. The intent of the communication is to update you on the efforts that we all continue to take to be as proactive as possible in HWRSD's prevention and mitigation efforts.

Facilities & Cleaning: Every night our custodial crews continue to clean and sanitize our schools according to established protocols and using an effective misting spray system to apply hospital-grade disinfectants, paying particular attention to all the frequently-touched surfaces.

Healthy Hygiene: Health-related posters throughout our schools remind everyone about the importance of healthy habits. These include frequent and thorough hand washing for at least 20 seconds; refraining from touching one's eyes, nose and mouth; and using hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.

Communication: We will continue to keep our HWRSD community updated via Connect-Ed and the District website as additional information becomes available. Please be sure your contact information is up to date. We also ask that you let us know if you and your family do not have access to online technology at home. This will assist us in making contingency plans to support continuity of learning in the event of a long-term shutdown.

Attendance: While attendance is central to the learning process, adults and children should stay home when they are ill and not feeling well enough to attend school or with any illness associated with a temperature greater than 100.0°. Additionally, individuals with the following symptoms should not attend school: vomiting, diarrhea, any undiagnosed rash or a red or pink itchy eye with drainage. Anyone who is sick should remain at home until they are feeling well

and fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. As always, you should consult your physician if you have any concerns or questions. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19, due to having had close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or have recently traveled from an area with widespread or ongoing community spread of COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider immediately.

Working Together: As the number of COVID-19 cases increase in Massachusetts, the level of concern and anxiety may grow and this is certainly understandable. Please know that we will strive to keep pace with new information, but also realize that this situation can change rapidly. Speculation and even rumors via social media can at times outpace the District's ability to broadly communicate factual information. We cannot stress enough that we, as a close-knit learning community, are committed to transparency and support. If you hear anything that causes you to be concerned, the responsible action is to check with the schools, local Boards of Health or State Department of Public Health (MDPH) for accuracy. If you have questions, seek guidance from the people best qualified to provide the answers. Please continue to stay updated with the most current information available from the CDC and the MDPH by visiting the following websites: [Mass.gov Info on Coronavirus](#) and [CDC Info on Coronavirus](#).

If you are looking for resources to support family conversations with your children about this issue, this link provides excellent information: [Parent Resource for Talking to Children about Coronavirus](#).

Again, we in the HWRSD remain deeply committed to the health and wellbeing of our students and staff, friends and neighbors, and will continue to share new information as the situation evolves.

Let's all do our best to stay healthy and take care of each other,

Sincerely,

Albert G. Ganem, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

Teri Brand, BSN, RN, NCSN
District Nurse Leader