

BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 27, 2020

Dear Parents and Staff,

Education is vital in our efforts to reduce the spread of the novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19) and any illness. DPH and local health departments are participating in weekly national conference calls with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and are also holding weekly state conference calls to exchange information impacting the state and local communities.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). According to the CDC the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that commonly circulate throughout the world, including here in Connecticut. They cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more serious illnesses requiring hospitalization. Reported illnesses due to infection with COVID-19 have ranged from mild to severe. Symptoms have included fever, cough and shortness of breath. Below are everyday preventative actions from the CDC that families, students, and staff can do to help combat the spread of respiratory diseases:

- **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands 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, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol also are effective. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Practice respiratory etiquette** by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs spread this way.
- **Clean and disinfect surfaces or objects.** Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill.
- **Limit exposure** by avoiding close contact with sick people. While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- **Stay home** when you are sick.

For more information about the coronavirus, the following websites are providing updates often:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

DPH: <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/Main-Page/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>

Thank you for your cooperation and vigilance in maintaining good hygienic practices and in keeping your children home if they are sick. We appreciate your assistance. If you have additional questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact your child's school nurse, Mary Welsh at BCS, 860-647-1655 or Deb McCarthy at BHS, 860-643-4574.

Sincerely,

Kristin B. Heckt

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Superintendent of Schools