

BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 4, 2020

Dear Parents,

As we move into the late weeks of winter we are seeing cases of colds, flu, and strep throat. As I am sure you are aware, the Coronavirus (COVID19) is intensifying in concern. Symptoms of coronavirus may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. These symptoms are very similar to symptoms of the flu, therefore, it is important that individuals check in with their primary care physician if they are experiencing signs of illness. For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.

Superintendents have been advised to begin planning should schools be closed for a length of time. I have asked principals to work on a plan for “Continued Learning” if we need to close schools as a result of the Coronavirus, or any other issue that might impact our schools resulting in long term closure. This is being done out of an abundance of caution at this time. It is important that we do not panic, but we do want to be prepared and take reasonable precautions.

We continue to perform regular cleaning of our schools and the bus company is doing the same with the buses including frequently touched objects and surfaces with disinfecting agents. We remain in constant contact with the Eastern Highlands Health District and are following their guidance in the use of appropriate cleaning materials. The guidance from the Eastern Highlands Health District is also aligned with information provided by the CDC.

Illness prevention is the first line of defense. The following are recommended measures that can lower the risk of illness, including COVID-19:

- Frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol is recommended. For information about handwashing, see [CDC's Handwashing](#) website.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover the mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces with a disinfectant product.
- Avoid sharing of drinking cups, food, and other personal items.
- Stay at home if you are ill to minimize the transmission of illness and disease.

It is important that parents communicate with their child's teacher if they are out with illness.

Students and staff should remain at home from school with the following symptoms of common illness or disease:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or greater. Students should be fever-free without use of a fever-reducing medication for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea. Students should remain at home until they have stopped vomiting for at least 24 hours and are able to tolerate fluids and solid foods.
- Sore throat that is accompanied by fatigue, body aches, and fever.
- A persistent/disruptive cough lasting for more than a few days or with fever.
- Eye discomfort with itching, redness, pain, and drainage.
- Skin rash suggestive of a communicable disease.

We request a physician note if your child has seen a physician and been out with a communicable disease. If the illness has been accompanied by a rash, we ask that any blisters or open sores be healed before returning to school.

For more information regarding the Novel Coronavirus, please see the following links:

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

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/Main-Page/2019-November-Coronavirus>
www.ehhd.org

Presently, the evolving path of the coronavirus is difficult to predict. Our District Medical Advisor, the Eastern Highlands Health District, and the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health are available to assist us with any emergency planning as needed. We continue to utilize the most current information and guidance given by the CDC, the Connecticut Department of Public Health, and Eastern Highlands Health District. I will continue to provide further updates as they become available or are necessary.

Sincerely,

Kristin B. Heckt

Kristin B. Heckt
Superintendent of Schools