

FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"The Scholarship City"

417 Rock Street, Fall River, MA 02720

Matthew H. Malone, Ph.D., Superintendent

March 6, 2020

Dear Fall River Public Schools Families:

As of today, 3/6/20, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has confirmed eight (8) total cases of "presumptive" Coronavirus in Massachusetts. There are no known cases of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in our schools or in the City as of today. We want to remind you that the Fall River Public Schools' Crisis Team has been meeting on a regular basis to monitor the situation. We are reviewing our Emergency Response Plans with our stakeholders and we continue to follow guidelines from Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Overall, our daily attendance for both students and staff has been good and we have not seen an increase in nurse office referrals or have our medical partners made us aware of any non-typical respiratory illnesses. Our School Nurses will continue to consult with Primary Care Providers, Local and State Health Departments if they observe individuals with symptoms or circumstances that seem to match those related to COVID-19 exposure. The custodial staff has increased the amount of times that high touch areas within the schools are disinfected and we are purchasing additional daily use and deep-cleaning materials. Our bus companies are cleaning the buses daily and taking all necessary precautions as well.

Tess Curran, Director of Health and Human Services, City of Fall River Board of Health shares, "We continue to encourage preventive actions (hand washing, staying home while sick, avoiding close contact with those who are sick, cleaning frequently touched surfaces, etc.) Additionally, we want to remind folks that while a flu shot will not protect you from COVID-19, it is important to receive the flu vaccine annually." All of us can work together to decrease fears and promote prevention of COVID-19, the flu, and other illnesses. We will continue to be proactive by advising students, families, and staff to:

- Wash your hands regularly for the length of time that it takes to sing the alphabet twice,
- Cover your mouth if you cough and avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose with your hands,
- Stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. You should be fever free for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication, before returning to school.

MDPH has created a website updated constantly with the latest guidance, including printable fact sheets in multiple languages. Visit: www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus for up to date information. Also, please continue to monitor our website at fallriverschools.org as we update information. Note: Governor Baker and the US State Department have both advised against any international travel to prevent further outbreaks. For questions / guidance you may call the MDPH Epidemiology Line 24 hours a day/7 days a week at 617-983-6800.

We will continue to keep you posted, especially if local/state circumstances change. We appreciate your help, support, and common sense – if you are sick, please stay home and do not return until you 24 hours fever free.

Cordially,

Dr. Matthew Malone



Superintendent of Schools

Karen Long



District Coordinator of Nurses K-12