

# FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*"The Scholarship City"*

417 Rock Street, Fall River, MA 02720

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*Matthew H. Malone, Ph.D., Superintendent*

February 27, 2020

Dear Fall River Public Schools Families and Employees,

First and foremost we want to assure you that we are not aware of any known cases of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Fall River; however we are carefully monitoring the virus. We are all concerned about the recent outbreak of the COVID-19 around the world and the impact it has on our local community. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is providing daily updates and recommendations. As of yesterday, Massachusetts has confirmed one case of the COVID-19 and the risk to our residents remains **low**. In the United States, there are a total of 53 cases confirmed. Concurrent with COVID-19, typical influenza risk is also very high. It is important to note that residents are more likely to become sick with a cold or flu than be exposed to COVID-19 at the present time. While this is a serious public health concern, the CDC reports that the immediate risk to the general public remains **low**. Yet, in today's connected world, we must always be prepared to respond to the global reality for the potential spread of this infectious disease. We share with you things you can do to prevent the spread of any infection or disease.

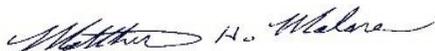
- Practice good hand hygiene. Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
- When coughing and sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue. You can also cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid sharing drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, dishes, towels or other items. Wash these items thoroughly with soap and water after use.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick whenever possible.
- Practice other good health habits: Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- It is important to keep children home from school when they are ill. Students should be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication, prior to returning to school.

The COVID-19 is an evolving situation that we are following closely. Rest assured that we are monitoring student health concerns. We are in close communication with the local Board of Health, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, City Officials, as well as health care agencies in the community. Our School Facilities Department will continue to clean and sanitize our educational spaces and "touch points" as we typically do during cold and flu season. We are following all recommended guidelines to ensure the safety of our students as well as staff. Please click on the following link to stay updated <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

We are Fall River and we will always do what we must to ensure the safety, security, and wellness of our students, our employees, and the families whom we serve.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matthew Malone



Superintendent of Schools

Karen A. Long



Director of Nursing