



# HERRICKS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## **Office of the Superintendent**

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February 28, 2020

Dear Members of the Herricks School Community,

The recent news involving the Novel Coronavirus is creating concern across the globe, and our school district is closely monitoring all facets of the emerging situation very carefully. Yesterday, I, along with other school superintendents in our county, met with Dr. Lawrence Eisenstein, the Commissioner of Health for the Nassau County Department of Health. As of this writing, there are no confirmed cases of Novel Coronavirus in New York State and 15 confirmed cases in the United States, excluding those individuals returning from a cruise ship ported in Japan. According to Dr. Eisenstein, six people in Nassau County have tested negative for Novel Coronavirus, and there are currently 78 asymptomatic individuals who recently traveled to China who are being isolated and monitored daily for a period of 14 days by the DOH.

The Commissioner, who is a specialist in the field of communicable diseases, was very forthcoming as he described what is known about the virus and the preparatory measures that are being taken to address it. At this point, Dr. Eisenstein is not recommending any changes to our normal school operations, and stressed the importance of following the usual preventative measures recommended during flu season. As per the Department of Health, there is no need at this time to cancel school or school activities, and there is no need for students or staff to wear surgical masks at school. There is, however a need to be proactive in our planning, and take the necessary measures to prevent the spread of illness in our schools. We will remain in frequent contact with the Nassau County Department of Health and the New York State departments of health and education for updates as the situation evolves. We will continue to follow the recommendations of state and local health officials, and keep you informed of any new developments. All of the emergency planning, training and preparation that we have done over the years will serve us well in the event of an actual health emergency.

In the event of a health emergency, any decisions regarding a school closing would come at the direction of the local departments of health and various state governmental agencies, with input from the New York State Education Department. While there is no indication that closing schools for an extended period is a possibility in our region, the District has begun discussions on how to best communicate with families and educate students in the unlikely event that schools are closed.

Please remind your children of the preventative measures during flu season, which include:

- Frequent handwashing
- Staying at home and making an appointment with your physician when sick
- Covering your cough and sneeze in your inside elbow

- Avoid touching your face

Our custodial staff is diligently disinfecting surfaces in our buildings, classrooms and school busses by following state health standards, and checking dispensers for hand soap and hand sanitizers in our classrooms to ensure that they are filled.

Our school nurses are available if you have any questions or concerns. In addition, you can find up-to-date information about COVID-19 on the following websites:

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [NYS Department of Health](#)
- [Nassau County Health Department](#)

New York State has also created a Coronavirus Hotline: **888-364-3065**.

As always, the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff remain the District's first priority. Rest assured that we will continue to follow the directions we receive from state and local health authorities regarding the Novel Coronavirus, and will take the preventative measures outlined above for the safety of our school community. I will continue to keep you updated on any new information as we receive it. Thank you for your cooperation.

Regards,

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