

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #10

24 Lyon Road
Burlington, CT 06013
860-673-2538 * 860-675-4976 (FAX)

Howard J. Thiery
Superintendent of Schools

Susan Laone
Director of Finance and
Operations

To: Region 10 Community
From: Howard Thiery, Superintendent of Schools
Date: March 10, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Update

Region 10 Community Members,

As you may have heard this afternoon Governor Lamont declared a state of emergency regarding the COVID 19 virus. This action is meant to support the plans that the state and municipalities have put in place to slow the spread of the COVID19 Corona virus. Last night I participated in a conference call with the Governor and members of the state leadership of the Departments of Health, Emergency Preparedness and Education regarding the state's recommendations. At this time all plans are based on trying to slow down the spread of the virus in our state and community. As of this afternoon there have been two verified cases of COVID19 in the state and the measures being put in place are designed to try and slow the spread of the virus that we have seen in other states and countries.

The recommendations for the public remain the same as they have been throughout cold and flu season. Wash your hands often, cover your cough and sneeze, hydrate, eat and rest well. In addition the state is asking people to limit unnecessary travel and avoid large public gatherings. Here in Region 10 the recommendations to limit travel and avoid large public gatherings has resulted in the cancellation of all school field trips through the end of April. We are also working to cancel or limit community gatherings in our schools though the end of April. These steps may need to be extended for the remainder of the year after reevaluating in early April. We regret the disruption this will cause to the events and activities our children are looking forward to but their health and safety and that of the community is our priority at this time.

Our schools continue to implement a disinfecting and sanitizing regimen that includes railings, doorknobs, desks and other hard surfaces. We have verified that we are using the right disinfectants and have the right methods in place for these processes. Hand sanitizers are in place throughout our schools and classrooms for students to use and we will be reminding students of the appropriate hand washing and cough coverage techniques.

One question that we have received lately relates to people who have travelled and returned to our community. While we cannot control where our community members travel to, we are asking that any community member who has traveled to a country with a "Level 3" Health Advisory (at this time this is China, Iran, Italy and South Korea) remain out of our schools for a 14 day period following their return. When we are aware of these situations we will handle them directly with those involved. Similarly it is important that anyone who is currently ill or who has a fever of 100 degrees or greater remain out of our schools until they are fever free for a full 24 hours.

In regards to the question about potential school closures the State Department of Education has let us know that if school closures occur they do not support or recommend distance or virtual learning during that closure out of a concern for meeting equity, access and other statutory requirements . The recommendation from the state is that the days missed as a result of any closure be made up during vacations or the end of the school year. Any District that wants to implement distance or virtual learning as a replacement for actual school days will be required to submit a waiver request to the state for approval of those days to count toward the 180 day requirement. At this time we are not anticipating an imminent need for school closures but this is a dynamic situation that requires our chronic monitoring.

In closing I just want to remind our community that despite all of the anxiety and chatter about this important health issue our schools are carrying on with normal educational programming every day. I have the pleasure and the privilege of walking through our schools every day and they are the same happy and supportive learning environments that you know and support. We remain committed to supporting the health and safety of our students and community and also are committed to our schools remaining safe, happy and productive learning environments throughout these complicated days. I will continue to provide community updates regularly or sooner if the need arises.

I hope that you all have a great rest of the day and while we want you to stay well informed we also recommend you occasionally take a break from all of the increased conversation about COVID19 for your own mental health and wellness.

All my best regards,

Howard Thiery
Superintendent
Regional School District 10