



School Administrative Unit No. 80

"Engaging all learners to succeed in their ever changing world"

Serving the Communities of Belmont and Canterbury

Shaker Regional School District

58 School Street

Belmont, NH 03220

March 3, 2020

Dear Shaker Regional Families,

I am writing to provide you an update regarding the respiratory illness known as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). This illness has been identified all over the world, and more recently here in New Hampshire. I want to assure you that our school district is keeping track of this rapidly changing situation, through communication with the NH Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), among others. Updated information from the CDC on COVID-19 in the United States can be found at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html. **At this time, health officials believe the risk to our school communities is low.** However, it is important for all of us to make sure we are taking precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illness, such as the flu, which we frequently see this time of year.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can be fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. It is known to spread through contact with an infected person's respiratory droplets, such as when a person coughs or sneezes. It has not been ruled out that it can spread by other means as well. People considered at high risk for this virus are those that have traveled to any locations for which CDC has issued a Level 3 travel notice:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

Much is being learned about this virus on a daily basis. Given the current information, health officials are recommending local communities and schools take the same steps to protect against COVID-19 as we take to prevent the spread of any other illness. Preventative steps are as follows:

- 1) Wash your hands **OFTEN** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Alcohol based sanitizer is acceptable if soap and water are not available
- 2) Cover your mouth and nose with the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze
- 3) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- 4) Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- 5) **Stay home when you are sick. Students should stay at home for at least 24 hours after the last signs of a fever without the use of fever reducing medicine**
- 6) Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (i.e. phones, door knobs, tables).

While a new type of illness can be scary, we can protect our students, staff, and the broader community by using the simple steps listed above. Please be assured that our teachers, administrators, school nurses, support staff and custodians are encouraging these simple and effective habits, as well as cleaning classroom tables and surfaces frequently. This is important not just to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, but to help prevent the spread of other infections that can lead to student illness and absences.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Tursi
Superintendent of Schools