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Superintendent of Schools

DANBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Danbury School Community,

I am writing as a follow up to my February 27th letter which updated the community on planning and precautionary measures regarding COVID-19. Since the first confirmed case in Connecticut, we are taking the following steps in order to be prepared to best ensure the health and safety of the Danbury Public Schools community.

We realize that some decisions being made impact families and students personally, such as field trips and athletic events. These decisions are being made in collaboration with the State and City of Danbury's Departments of Health, using guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the district's medical advisory team. These difficult decisions are made in the school community's best interest at the strong recommendation of Governor Lamont and emergency personnel.

What the School District is Doing:

- Tuesday, March 17, 2020, will now be a regular early dismissal day for students, instead of the scheduled one hour early release to allow staff to prepare for any possible school closures.
- Updating parent contact information electronically in order to efficiently and effectively communicate with parents in a timely manner
- Regularly communicating with the Danbury Health Director
- Ensuring weekly conference calls with City and District emergency preparedness personnel
- Engaging in frequent communication with Mayor Boughton
- Teaming with Student Transportation of America regarding the cleaning of our buses
- Collaborating with the State and Regional Superintendents regarding mandates and recommendations from the Connecticut Health Department and CDC
- Monitoring Connecticut State Department of Education for updates and plans should such a school closure for an extended time be necessary
- In the event that schools must be closed, we have provided supplemental resources that can be accessed for students K-12 during the closure.
<https://sites.google.com/danbury.k12.ct.us/extend/home>
- In addition, teachers in grades 6-12 may be supplying separate resources more specific to their subject matter.

In addition:

- All school-sponsored field trips are cancelled until further notice. This includes trips and events held in state, out of state and out of the country. Further communication will come from the district regarding the process and documentation for potential reimbursement.
- As outlined by Gov. Lamont's office and the state's Emergency Management Task Force, school events with an anticipated attendance of 100 or more people will be cancelled or postponed. This includes, but is not limited to assemblies, plays and spring concerts. Information or any adjustments regarding specific events will be communicated by building administrators.
- All athletic events will be held without spectators and further guidance will come from the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference.
- Parent-Teacher conferences will be held electronically or via phone.
- District administrators are collaborating with building teams to create access to learning resources for our students if the needs arise for schools to be closed for an extended period of time.
 - NOTE: Our current plan for a mandated school closure by the State and/or City Health Department calls for utilization of our emergency days and April vacation, if necessary, in order to satisfy the 180 day minimum student school day requirement.

Parents Special Information and Resources

- **Please refer to the March 6, 2020 mailing instructing parents to create a PowerSchool Parent Portal Account which will enable the district to contact you with updated information in a timely manner.**
- Please reinforce with your children the CDC prevention measures ([Centers for Disease Control](#)). Handwashing and use of hand sanitizers is still a primary means of maintaining a healthy environment. **Please keep your child home if he/she is sick.** Also, if your child does test positive for the flu please report it to the school nurse.
- The [CDC cleaning guidelines](#) are followed by our custodial team. According to CT PUBLIC ACT 09-81, *An Act Concerning Green Cleaning in our Schools*, schools can only use green cleaning products. In addition, the state has created a list of other approved cleaning products that will be used if necessary.
- The current COVID-19 situation has the potential to change on a daily basis. Please refer to the [Danbury Public Schools website](#) for the most up-to-date information.

In closing, discussion and planning for this coronavirus epidemic continue to occur throughout the country and within our state. I will work closely with Danbury's Health Department and Mayor Boughton to review the district calendar of events every two weeks in order to make the most informed decisions. The Danbury Public Schools remain vigilant and want to assure you that the health and welfare of the students, teachers and staff are the highest priority when making decisions.

Respectfully,

Dr. Sal Pascarella, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools
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