March 11, 2020

Dear CCPS Families:

I wanted to provide you with an update as we monitor what is a rapidly evolving situation involving the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). I know that there is a lot of information from the media and from various agencies, but I think it is important to keep you informed of what we are doing at Cecil County Public Schools.

We are in frequent contact on a daily basis (and sometimes multiple times a day) with the Cecil County Health Department and the Cecil County Department of Emergency Services. We work closely with these agencies to share information in order to ensure that we have the latest news as it relates to Cecil County. In addition, members of my staff and I participate in weekly national CDC conference calls followed by briefings of all local partners at the Cecil County Department of Emergency Services so that we can coordinate efforts across the county.

At CCPS, we have been working to create and implement an action plan based on the guidance and recommendations from our local health officials as well as with state and national direction. Included in this packet are a series of questions and answers designed for both staff and families. While many of these factors are beyond our control, and we do acknowledge that this situation is constantly changing, our goal is to be proactive in addressing as many potential issues NOW.

Thank you for your continued partnership and cooperation as we deal with an issue that has a lot of “unknowns” at the moment. We know that this is not just a “schools” issue and we are appreciative of each of our community partners for assisting us in these efforts. We will continue to make every effort, along with these community partners, to keep our students, staff, families, and general community safe and informed.

If you have specific questions about the Coronavirus, please contact the Cecil County Health Department, at 410-996-5100.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Lawson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
CCPS RESPONSE TO COVID-19
Updated: 3/11/2020

How is CCPS making decisions in terms of prevention and response protocols?
CCPS remains in constant contact with the Cecil County Health Department and the Cecil County Department of Emergency Services, as we do with any health-related situation. These agencies would be the authorities to advise us if they determine that we need to close schools for any period of time.

What proactive measures has CCPS taken to minimize the spread of COVID-19?
- Custodial cleaning crews have reprioritized their daily cleaning routines in order to provide even greater focus towards disinfecting common surfaces such as doorknobs, desktops, and tabletops, in addition to areas such as restrooms and locker rooms. Cafeteria tabletops, benches, and service lines are sanitized at the end of breakfast and at the end of every lunch shift.
- Custodial teams are using a hospital-grade disinfectant that specifically kills the novel coronavirus as well as a host of other germs including more common influenza strands. In the event a school surpasses 10% absenteeism, extra custodial resources are assigned to that school to thoroughly sanitize. CCPS utilizes both the Clorox 360 (Clorox Anywhere) and the Protexus (EarthSafe Purtabs) Electrostatic Sprayer in the sanitizing process. Even if absenteeism is below the 10% threshold, these machines are rotated throughout the county as a proactive measure.
- SC Johnson DEB hand soap is available in all CCPS restrooms and DEB hand sanitizer is placed strategically throughout the schools. These supplies are checked several times daily for stock.
- The CCPS Transportation Department and all of our bus contractors have directed all bus drivers to disinfect and wipe down all seats and high-touch areas daily.
- Students and staff are given the opportunity to wash their hands, with soap and water, particularly before and after meals, but also as needed throughout the school day.

How will CCPS handle student absences?
We understand that these are unusual circumstances and special consideration will be given to this in regards to student attendance. In addition, we will be suspending the Perfect Attendance recognition program in an effort to support that sick students should be kept home and students who are well should continue to attend school. Concerns regarding student attendance will be handled on a case by case basis between individual families and the school principal. We cannot stress enough that students who are experiencing any flu-like symptoms, including a fever, should be kept home.

Are students known to have traveled internationally lately permitted to return to school?
CCPS is working closely with the Cecil County Health Department and Cecil County Department of Emergency Services on protocols in the event any of our students, staff, and/or family members return from international travel. Moreover, CDC and federal officials are monitoring the return of international
travelers, and they determine which travelers are quarantined based on flight origin, passenger lists, layovers, and transfers. However, if travelers are cleared by federal officials, either by being released from quarantine or not being subject to quarantine, they are free to be among the general public and, as such, entitled to be provided FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) without restriction.

**Will interstate or intrastate travel for students and staff be restricted?**
As directed by the Maryland State Department of Education, students and staff will not be participating in any out-of-state activities, meetings, or events until further notice. See the following question for details regarding field trips.

**How will field trips be addressed?**
As directed by the Maryland State Department of Education, students and staff will not be participating in out-of-state field trips until further notice. In terms of planning future trips, teachers should consult with their building principal before moving forward with planning additional field trips as the extent of this is not yet known.

**How will schools be handling large-scale events?**
To date, we have not cancelled any large-scale events. We will continue to monitor the situation and seek guidance from public health experts.

**Who is responsible for making the decision to close schools?**
Any decision to close schools temporarily or for an extended period of time would be made at the direction of the Cecil County Health Department and the response would be dependent on the situation. The priority consideration in any such decision will be the safety of students and staff. It is important to note that with the rapidly changing nature of this situation, it is uncertain how much notice we would be able to provide staff and families if we were directed to close schools. As with inclement weather, parents and staff members with children should be proactive and establish childcare arrangements now. Also be sure that your contact information (phone numbers, email) are updated.

**If schools were closed, would staff still be required to come to work even though students were told to remain at home?**
As the answer above, this would also be dependent upon the specifics of the situation; depending on the level of closure and based on the direction of public health officials. Staff could be asked to report to their buildings, report to an alternate location, or stay home temporarily. That decision would be communicated with any messaging of a recommended closure. Depending upon the specifics of the situation, staff may be asked to report to work when students are asked to stay home. As stated above, if you have school-age children, be proactive and establish childcare arrangements now.

**Will CCPS still provide instructional review and practice if schools are closed and students stay home?**
Yes, CCPS is currently working to develop educational opportunities for all students in grades PreK through 12 in the event of a closure. Currently, we are focusing on the areas of Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. World Languages will also be included for the secondary level. Content will be a combination of hands-on activities and online review. All directions will be posted online for families to access. Targeted instruction could be provided to secondary students depending on the specific course. A survey of students’ home access to our online platforms was administered by each school to determine student need. We will work to distribute “paper copies” of materials to students who do not have access to our online platform.

Updated 3/11/2020
How will this work for students who do not have home access to a computer or device?
Each school has been working to assess each family’s access to a device as well as internet availability. The CCPS Office of Technology will use this information to provide a loaned Chromebook to students as necessary based on need. In situations where technology is not accessible in the home, schools will work to provide hands-on activities.

What basic preventative measures should be taken by families and staff?
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your mouth and nose while coughing and sneezing
- Stay home if you or your children are sick
- Do not send children to school if they are sick
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Where can I find additional information?
- CCPS COVID-19 webpage: www.ccps.org/coronavirus
- Maryland Department of Health: https://health.maryland.gov/coronavirus
- Any Cecil County-specific updates will be posted on the Cecil County Health Department website: www.cecilcountyhealth.org.