



# NORTH BELLMORE SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

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March 12, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, Faculty and Staff,

The North Bellmore UFSD administration team and the Board of Education members continue to work diligently to assess all plans for the constantly evolving situation related to the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). At this time, we have not been informed by the Department of Health of any individuals in the North Bellmore School District who have tested positive for COVID-19. Please keep in mind that this could change at any time and that I am only permitted to communicate information that is confirmed by the Department of Health.

The District continues to engage in preventative measures to reduce the chance of exposure, contingency planning in the event we learn of a local concern, and continuity planning in the event that there is an extended school closure.

We received additional guidance from the New York State Education Department indicating that if a confirmed case exists for a student or staff member the school will close for 24-hours in order to provide time for deep cleaning and to determine if a longer closure is warranted. The guidance indicated that closure decisions will be made in collaboration with the Department of Health. Please know that if a school closing becomes necessary we will contact you through our automated communication system (Blackboard Connect).

Below you will find some of the proactive measures we are taking to address this situation:

### **Evaluating large gatherings and field trips:**

Our goal is to minimize the potential for exposure to COVID-19. As such, we have made the decision to cancel field trips, activities and events that have been scheduled for the remainder of **March and April**, effective Friday, March 13. Examples of the events include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Field trips
- PTA, SEPTA, and North Bellmore Coordinating Council meetings
- PTA/District sponsored in-school assembly programs and presentations
- PTA/District sponsored after school/evening programs (e.g., book fairs, family game night).
- PTA enrichment programs



- PTA Project Rise
- Parents/guardians/guest readers and all classroom visitors (no outside food except for student lunch and snack)
- Use of indoor facilities by local community groups (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Brownies, Basketball, etc.)
- Spring concerts, school plays and student performances
- Festival Band and Festival Chorus rehearsals

***Please note that the Bellmore Merrick Child Care morning and after school programs will continue to operate.***

Information about building-specific cancellations will be provided by the principal and/or the PTA. I realize that this is very disappointing news; however, we remain committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for our students, families, faculty and staff.

We will continue to assess and adjust our plans as circumstances arise. It is our sincere hope that some of the canceled activities can be rescheduled for later in the school year.

**Promoting proper hand washing and coughing protocols:**

All schools have reviewed proper hygiene protocols with students and continue to reinforce these protocols on a daily basis.

**Cleaning and disinfecting of facilities:**

We will continue to rigorously clean and disinfect all buildings and district owned buses. We are working with our outside transportation contractors and have reviewed their cleaning and disinfecting protocols to ensure that our buses are properly cleaned. In addition, we continue to implement disinfecting cleaning measures in all district kitchens, including all food and non-food related surfaces. In order to provide the appropriate time for this function, all school buildings will be closed at 6:00 PM each night.

**Planning for continuity of instruction:**

The District has been working to plan and prepare for a variety of situations, including continuity of instruction in the event of an extended closure. Online resources are being prepared and will be available to students through our district website if a long term closure becomes necessary. Please let your child's teacher know if you are not able to access the internet from your home.

**Absences:**

Students who are absent for medical reasons or due to a quarantine related to COVID-19, including those whose physician is recommending absence due to underlying medical reasons, will be marked "excused." Students who are absent by family choice due to a general concern about COs, with no primary exposure, as defined by the Department of Health (this is defined as a student who has come into close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19) will be marked "unexcused."



The District will continue to share information with our community as it becomes available. Please always refer to our website for the most up-to-date information about our schools. There is a lot of information circulating related to COVID-19 and I'd like to reiterate the importance of relying on credible sources of information. Our website has a link to "COVID-19 Resources" which includes the latest information that we have on this situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marie L. Testa".

Marie L. Testa  
Superintendent of Schools