March 9, 2020

Dear Newport Public Schools Community:

At our weekly conference call with Dr. Alexander-Scott the following important facts were shared. Please see these latest updates and know from our March 4th conference call Dr. Scott stressed that someone needs to be exposed to someone who actually has the virus in order to be considered high risk in contracting the virus and the general risk in Rhode Island remains very low. One should only self-quarantine if a person has come into direct contact with a person that has been exposed to COVID-19 or has been tested positive. For more information on this, please see the DOH website and recommendations.

Department of Health

Here are some other facts and recommendations that were shared on our Weekly Conference Call:

- The Rhode Island Department of Health has a 24 hour hotline **401-222-8022** for anyone seeking information about the COVID-19 virus. You may also access the RI Department of Health’s website [https://health.ri.gov/](https://health.ri.gov/)
- A recommendation to amend school districts’ attendance policy to ease the requirement of medical notes for students and staff during this period of time. (NPS is reviewing this.)
- It was recommended that all school related international trips be cancelled.
- School custodial staff should clean door handles, door knobs and railing twice per day (morning and after school). NPS is doing that now.
- All buses should be sanitized daily.(Our Durham Bus Company is already doing this.)
- If schools were to cancel, we are to contact the Rhode Island Department of Health first before a final decision is made.
- Schools should begin to make a plan to continue student education if there should be a school closure. (The district is in the process of putting together additional plans building upon our situation last year in the gas crisis.)
- The RI Department of health protocols for handwashing and cleanliness were reviewed and can be found at the RI Department of Health’s website [https://health.ri.gov/](https://health.ri.gov/)
- The recommendation from the Superintendent’s group was made to include the RI Association of School Committees on these weekly conference calls.
Weekly updates will continue and more if necessary going forward. The important message is that everyone has a part in this ongoing situation, and we will continue to keep you informed.

Have a good week!

Colleen Burns Jermain, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Newport Public Schools
March 9, 2020

I hope everyone had a nice weekend.

This is an update on COVID-19. We will continue to post to apps and update all messaging each week or sooner if necessary.

The school department is taking all its direction from the Department of Health (DOH) in conjunction with the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). This is an evolving situation and will most likely change as time moves forward. Everyone should continue to use good hygiene practices of washing one’s hands with warm water and soap, use proper cough etiquette, drink plenty of fluids, get your flu shot, take care of oneself and monitor oneself carefully.

The Department of Health has created a website that is updated regularly with the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), including COVID-19 facts. We are providing this link for you here.

Over the weekend a third positive case for COVID-19 in RI was identified. The woman works in a nursery school in Pawtucket and had direct contact with a person with COVID 19 in late February. The nursery school will be closed for two weeks. As the weeks unfold there it is expected there will probably be new cases discovered. It is very important that everyone stays diligent.

The school department is staying on top of this by wiping down all surfaces during the day and night following the guidelines provided by the Department of Health and CDC. We have not seen an increase or change at this time in student or staff absences and will continue to monitor this. Supplies have been provided by the school department and our PTOs. Thank you to our PTO members. We greatly appreciate the team effort.

If you or a family member do find you have had direct contact with anyone with COVID-19 or being tested for COVID-19 please let my office or your child’s principal know immediately and we ask you self-quarantine yourself and your family members for fourteen days. We will then contact the Department of Health for next steps. School closures will be determined in collaboration with the Department of Health and determined on a case by case situation. There is also a COVID-19 hotline if you have general questions and would prefer to speak directly to the
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Department of Health representatives. I am resending that number to you now. It is 401-222-8022. (Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm). After hours: Call 211

The school department will continue to share information as we receive it. The important part right now is for all of us to do our part and follow the recommended practices from DOH and stay calm. This is a new situation for everyone and we are prepared based on all the information we have.

Have a good week.

Sincerely,

Colleen Burns Jermain, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
9 de marzo de 2020

Estimada comunidad de las escuelas públicas de Newport:

En nuestra conferencia semanal por teléfono con el Dr. Alexander-Scott, los siguientes hechos importantes fueron compartido. Por favor vea estas últimas actualizaciones y sepa de nuestra conferencia telefónica del 4 de marzo. Dr. Scott enfatizó que alguien necesita estar expuesto a una persona que realmente tiene el virus para ser considerado de alto riesgo al contraer el virus, y el riesgo general en Rhode Island sigue siendo muy baja. Uno solo debe ponerse en cuarentena si una persona ha estado directamente en contacto con una persona que haya estado expuesta a COVID-19 o que haya resultado positiva. Para obtener más información al respecto, consulte el sitio web y las recomendaciones del DOH.

Departamento de Salud

Aquí hay algunos otros hechos y recomendaciones que se compartieron en nuestra Llamada-Conferencia semanal:

- El Departamento de Salud de Rhode Island tiene una línea directa las 24 horas 401-222-8022 para cualquier persona buscando información sobre el virus COVID-19. También puede acceder al Departamento de RI del sitio web de Salud https://health.ri.gov/
- Una recomendación para enmendar la política de asistencia de los distritos escolares para facilitar el requisito de notas médicas para estudiantes y personal durante este período de tiempo. (NPS está revisando esta.)
- Se recomendó cancelar todos los viajes internacionales relacionados con la escuela.
- El personal de limpieza de la escuela debe limpiar las manijas de las puertas, los pomos de las puertas y las barandas dos veces al día (mañana y después de la escuela). NPS está haciendo eso ahora.
- Todos los autobuses deben desinfectarse diariamente (nuestra empresa de autobuses de Durham ya lo está haciendo).
- Si las escuelas se cancelaran, primero debemos contactar al Departamento de Salud de Rhode Island antes de que se tome una decisión final.
- Las escuelas deberían comenzar a hacer un plan para continuar la educación de los estudiantes si hubiera un cierre de escuela. (El distrito está en proceso de armar planes adicionales aprovechando nuestra situación el año pasado en la crisis del gas.)
• Se revisaron los protocolos del Departamento de Salud de RI para el lavado de manos y la limpieza y se puede encontrar ese protocolo en el sitio web del Departamento de Salud de RI https://health.ri.gov/
• La recomendación del grupo del Superintendente se hizo para incluir el RI Asociación de Comités Escolares en estas llamadas de conferencia semanales.

Las actualizaciones semanales continuarán y más si es necesario en el futuro. El mensaje importante es que todos tienen una parte en esta situación actual y continuaremos manteniéndolo informado.

¡Ten una buena semana!

Colleen Burns Jermain, Ed.D.
Superintendente de Escuelas Públicas de Newport