



Ledyard Public Schools

Administrative Offices

March 9, 2020

Dear Parents,

I wrote to you recently about Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the news. We continue to closely monitor the situation and are in constant contact with local and State health officials. At this time we are not aware of any families in our region or students in our school who are ill with COVID-19. Despite no news about the virus specifically in SE CT, public health officials continue to share concern about the spread and inevitably it will be here in our region.

I urge you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 and for that matter the flu:

- Keep children at home when they are sick. They should stay home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone (without the use of fever-reducing medicine) except to get medical care.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/>
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and discard the tissue after you use it; or, cough and sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Use social distancing of 3 ft or more.

And of course avoid close contact with sick people or those who have been in contact with someone with COVID-19.

Ledyard Public Schools will continue to be vigilant with cleaning and in school prevention education. In addition to posters and other visuals our students have had refreshers about handwashing and proper cough/sneeze etiquette. Please reinforce handwashing and healthy behaviors at home. The actions we take in light of the COVID-19 outbreak will serve us well long into the future as we deal with other outbreaks.

At this time schools will remain open and we have not yet canceled school or community group activities or existing trips. Based on State guidance we have cancelled out of country and out of State travel. I have also directed our schools to cease making/scheduling new travel plans and/or field trips within the State for the remainder of this school year. Existing/scheduled in-State trips are subject to cancellation based on advice from Ledge Light Health District (LLHD) or the CT Department of Public Health (DPH) at any time.

The district's pandemic plan has been updated and we will be working with our Regional Education Service Center, LEARN, to develop contingency learning plans that students could use to stay engaged in learning in the event that we are directed to close schools for an extended period of time. I advise families to also think through your own contingency plans for child care should there be extended school closures as part of a community mitigation plan/State of Emergency.

Should the district be required to close for an extended period of time CT State Department of Education has advised that we will be required to exhaust all options to meet the 180 school day requirement. This means that we may be required to hold school during "April Recess" and extend the school year till June 30. Please know we will notify you of all actions as soon as possible. For this reason I strongly suggest you not schedule travel during the above mentioned periods.

It is my hope that we never need to implement our pandemic or emergency plans, but they remain at the ready in case we do. This situation is fluid and we should expect further changes and adjustments as we deal with this outbreak. I will keep you updated with any additional important information as it is made available to me. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Jay Hartling
Superintendent of Schools