



BERKSHIRE JR-SR
HIGH SCHOOL
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WARREN STREET
— ACADEMY —

11 Warren Street
Hudson, NY 12534

March 3, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are reaching out to you to provide some important information about the coronavirus (also known as COVID-19 or 2019-nCoV). Given the media attention and the importance of your child's health and safety, we want to share some basic information about the coronavirus and ways to stay healthy.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause symptoms of colds. However, this is a "novel" virus, originating in China in late 2019. Until recently, this particular strain of coronavirus circulated among animals only. Symptoms most commonly include fever with cough, shortness of breath, headache, sore throat and runny nose. Some people have fewer or no symptoms at all. The virus is likely spread from coughing and sneezing droplets.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers this to be a serious public health concern, based on current information, the immediate health risk to our school district and school community is low at this time.

Despite the low health risk, we are following guidance from the CDC and public health departments at the state and county levels to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. The district has infectious disease controls in place. Our staff continues to clean and disinfect all school areas, including high-touch and high-traffic areas, to help minimize the spread of viruses and other illnesses. Our school district will continue to take proactive measures and work with local and state officials, as needed.

The New York State Department of Health also recommends the following ways to minimize the spread of all respiratory viruses, including COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home when you or your child are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. After using a tissue, throw it in the trash.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The local health department will contact our school district if a suspected or known COVID-19 case emerges in our community. Our district is prepared to work with any affected families. If you or a family member begins to show the symptoms of a respiratory illness (including COVID-19), please call your healthcare provider. Please also contact the district to notify us of any travel to any infected countries so that we can coordinate with the health department.

Thank you for your support in keeping our students and staff safe. More information on the coronavirus is available at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and 1-888-364-3065.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Vanyo
Interim Superintendent