



Orange Township Public Schools

Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Ed.D
Office of the Superintendent



March 12, 2020

Good Day Families and Staff,

The health, safety, and well being of our school community are the top priorities of the Board of Education, administration, faculty, and staff within the Orange Township Public School District. The district has policies in place to address the well being of all students and staff. Policy 8451 addresses the Control of Communicable Disease. As a district, we are monitoring the alerts from the New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control. On Wednesday, March 11, 2020, the district was closed as a preventative measure, and in line with the guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education where a deep cleaning of all facilities within the Orange Township Public Schools took place. As stated in my original letter on March 4, 2020, we are being proactive versus reactive.

On Friday, March 13, 2020, the district will institute an early dismissal for **STUDENTS ONLY** at 12:30 PM so staff can plan accordingly should we have to close for an extended period of time in the event that the New Jersey Department of Health or the County Department of Health recommends school closure. This is **NOT** an indication that we are closing, but in order to plan this time is necessary to provide an optimal educational experience for children should the need arise.

I want to provide you with some background so all parties are clear related to school closures outside of the cleaning that was completed on Wednesday, March 11, 2020. In the event a board of education is provided a written directive by either the NJDOH or the health officer of the jurisdiction to institute a public health-related closure, the board of education may utilize home instruction to provide instructional services to enrolled students. The provision of home instruction services should be guided by N.J.A.C. 6A: 16-10.1 and may include direct services, online instruction, or any other means developed by the district to meet the needs of its students. Any day in which students impacted by a public health-related closure have access to home instruction services provided consistent with the guidance in this memo will count as a day in which the board of education has provided public school facilities toward its compliance with the 180-day requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A: 7F-9. The purpose of Friday, March 13th is to put vehicles in place to ensure that learning continues and the 180-Day requirement is not compromised.

Further, the district encourages frequent hand washing for students and staff and continues to advise those who are ill to remain home. As recommended by the CDC, facemasks are not a protective measure and are meant to be used for those who are ill or experiencing symptoms. Please do not send your child to school wearing a mask. If your child comes to school wearing a mask, we will assume they are ill and contact you to retrieve your child immediately.



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Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The symptoms can be mild to severe, like a cold, including sneezing, congestion, body aches, and fever. The best way to prevent COVID-19, as well as the flu is by taking precautionary measures. We ask that you assist us in the following in order to be proactive regarding ensuring continued health and safety:

- **Avoid touching the nose, mouth, and eyes**
- **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve, not your hands**
- **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 (soap and water are the recommended measure)**
- **Avoid contact with those that are sick**
- **If you are sick, you are encouraged to stay home.**
- **Pick up your child within 30 minutes if they are deemed to be sick as specified by the school nurse**
- **Report if you plan to travel overseas over the next several months to the school (this again allows us as a district to be proactive instead of reactive)**

I want to thank you for your continued support of the Orange Township Public School District. Again, we are committed to the health and safety of all stakeholders that enter our doors. On the district website (www.orange.k12.nj.us), posted (Under District News and Announcements) is the most current information as it relates to the Coronavirus as well as preventative measures. We will continue to update the district website accordingly as more information comes available.

For additional information you are encouraged to visit the New Jersey Department of Health Website:
https://www.state.nj.health/ed/topics/covid2019_resources.shtml

Educationally yours,

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