



HERRICKS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Office of the Superintendent

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Dear Members of the Herricks School Community,

As you may know, yesterday, Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order directing all schools in New York to close by Wednesday, March 18 for two weeks, ending **April 1**. The governor will then reassess whether to extend the school closures further, depending on the best advice of the medical professionals who are studying the impact and spread of the Novel Coronavirus pandemic.

In my over forty years as an educator, I have never experienced anything quite like this. As we go through this uncharted territory, know that we will do our best to communicate with you and support our students remotely. Our first priority is the health and safety of our students and families in Herricks. During the weeks prior to our school closure on Monday, I was in touch with the Nassau County Department of Health on a daily basis, following-up on rumors, and checking-in to see if we had any confirmed cases in our community. As of now, there have been no confirmed Coronavirus cases among staff or students in any of our schools. Nevertheless, I urge you and your children to continue to practice the prevention protocols that we have stressed in the past: wash your hands frequently, avoid touching your face, and cover your cough or sneeze. While school is closed, please remind your children of the importance of practicing social distancing. As difficult as it may be, they should not be congregating in large groups or coming into close contact with others at this time. While our student athletes are on hiatus from their sports, they can certainly occupy their time with outdoor activities, but it is important they are not playing together in large groups.

We are also concerned about the emotional health of our students. Children gain a sense of security and comfort in routines. As much as possible, continue the routines of your family life and enjoy fun activities to occupy your time. Our guidance counselors, school psychologists and social workers are available via email if you want to touch base. We also have helpful resources for you to read on the Health and Safety page of our school district website.

Our administrators and teachers have been busy making preparations to moving over to remote learning. This is a new adventure for us all, and our teachers have developed some great ideas to engage our students in learning while they are home. It won't duplicate the classroom experience, but it will provide a measure of continuity of instruction. Elizabeth Guercin, our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, will be sending you details about this plan very soon. Remote learning will begin on **Thursday, March 19**.

There will be many unanswered questions and challenges in the weeks ahead. While we may not have all of the answers at this point, know that we will continue to provide you and our students with our unwavering support. Herricks is a wonderful community; we are resilient and we will get through this difficult time together. I will continue to provide you with updates as new information becomes available. Meanwhile, stay well and know that you are in my thoughts.

Regards,

Fino M. Celano, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools