

March 6, 2020

Dear Abington School District Community,

I write to provide you with updated information regarding Abington School District's preparations related to the coronavirus (COVID-19). **At this time, it is important to state that there are no known or reported cases of coronavirus in the Abington School District.** As you are aware, news and information pertaining to the virus have been evolving rapidly, and our aim is to keep our community informed of the steps Abington School District is taking to protect the health and safety of our students and staff.

**A Coronavirus Resource Center has been created on our website (<https://www.abington.k12.pa.us/news/coronavirus-resource-center>) to house updates pertaining to the virus, in order to ensure that our ASD community members have access to relevant and accurate information as it pertains to our schools, including guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.**

As indicated in last week's parent/guardian communication, we continue to work closely with health officials across the Commonwealth and county to monitor the virus, and operate as directed by these entities. In addition, we consult regularly, and often, with our district physician in regard to matters directly impacting the health of our school community.

I recently met with other superintendents from Montgomery County for a presentation by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDH) discussing preparations for the coronavirus in the K-12 environment. Please be assured that if there are instances of suspected coronavirus in any of our buildings, the MCDH *will* notify us as early as possible and recommend next steps to prevent the spread of the disease. Upon notification from the MCDH, you will be contacted.

Earlier today, I met with administrators from across the District, including Principals and Central Staff, to discuss preparedness within our buildings and the following steps Abington School District has already taken, or will be taking, to keep our school community healthy:

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting Routines**

In all schools, the Facilities Department has increased their cleaning and disinfecting routines, using information from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to ensure that the materials used are safe and effective. Please be aware that enhanced cleaning will occur with frequently touched items e.g, door handles, water fountains, etc. For areas in which mass amounts of surfaces need sanitization (such as athletic rooms, classrooms or common areas), electrostatic sprayers will be used to apply a mist of disinfectant that will dry overnight. Practices such as these have been implemented on our school buses by the Transportation Department, and also in our cafeterias in partnership with our food services provider, Chartwells. Individually wrapped utensils for student use, and disposable trays, will be provided in the cafeterias of all schools.

Additionally, we continue to ensure our air filters are checked on a regular basis to provide a fresh airflow throughout all nine school buildings.

### **Students and Staff Health and Hygiene**

As you know, from my prior correspondence, students received information on proper handwashing, coughing and sneezing protocol as per the CDC. Additionally, posters are displayed throughout the schools as reminders.

At this time, it is important to reiterate that monitoring the health of your child and practicing good hygiene is the best defense in the spread of this virus. It is also critical that if your child is experiencing any symptoms that you keep them home from school. Common signs of infection include: respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. Standard recommendations to prevent the spread of infection include regular hand washing, and covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

Please know that our Health Services Department is monitoring student illness. If students appear ill during the day, they will be assessed by the nurse and, if necessary, sent home as soon as possible. While students wait in the health suites, they will be assigned to a separate location that is apart from the rest of the students in the health suite. If you have any questions about your child's health, please contact your healthcare provider.

### **Teaching and Learning**

In Abington School District, our primary responsibility is to provide positive and safe learning environments for students and staff. In the event one or all of our schools need to be closed for an extended period of time, our Teaching and Learning Department is working diligently to develop a contingency plan for instruction. This may include educational modules such as online lessons, take-home projects, or other forms of learning that can be done at home. Following the announcement of a closure, parents/guardians can expect to receive further instructional information via Skyward Message Center. I want to reiterate that this will only be done in the event of an extended closure, as Abington School District currently has four instructional days built into the school calendar beyond the 180-day Pennsylvania state requirement, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education has been given authority to respond to this emergency as necessary, as per Governor Wolf's direction today.

As a precaution, if you do not have internet access at home, please contact your child's principal as soon as possible, who will be able to assist you in making individual arrangements should the need occur.

### **Communications and Technology**

*If necessary*, Abington School District will use our typical channels of communication to announce a school closure or early dismissal, which include, but are not limited to, online resources, our cable channel and parent/guardian communications. For parents/guardians, the best way to ensure the receipt of information is to check, and update if necessary, the parent/guardian contact

information listed in Skyward Family Access. This includes a primary email and phone number, in addition to enrolling in the District's text messaging system with a verified mobile number. Communications instructions are available via the following link: <https://www.abington.k12.pa.us/departments/community-relations/social-media-district-communications/>

Please know that the health, safety and welfare of our students and staff is our highest priority, and it is best maintained through the efforts and cooperation of all members of our community. Be mindful of the health of others around you, and please contact your healthcare provider should you have any concerns. Abington School District will continue to keep our community updated by providing information via our [Coronavirus Resource Center](#), and I will continue to send email updates on these matters.

Regards,

Jeffrey S. Fecher, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Abington School District is committed to complying fully with all Federal and state laws banning discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin/ethnicity, veteran status, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or religion with regard to instructional programs, extracurricular activities, and employment practices. For more information see the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act at the following: [www.phrc.state.pa.us](http://www.phrc.state.pa.us). Any person who believes they are a victim of discrimination by the school district should refer the matter to the attention of the building principal or area supervisor. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, it should be brought to the attention of the Superintendent of Schools. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Director of Student Services 970 Highland Avenue. Abington, PA 19001 215-881-2505  
Director of Human Resources 970 Highland Avenue, Abington, PA 19001 215-881-2509