



POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

18 South Perry Street, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601

| Telephone (845) 489-1254 |

Eric J. Rosser, PhD, Superintendent of Schools

March 2, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As you may know, recently, a new coronavirus called 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was first detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. This is a new virus that had not previously been found in humans. This coronavirus can lead to fever, cough, and trouble breathing or shortness of breath. There have been thousands of confirmed cases in China and new cases are continuing to be diagnosed in a growing number of countries, including the United States.

The health and well-being of our students is of the utmost importance and we share your concerns and fears about this virus. As of today, there has been only one confirmed case in New York, with none outside of New York City. We have been told that the risk to residents and students is still low and therefore, at this time, we have no plans to cancel school or any social events and there is no need for students or staff to wear surgical masks at school.

Based on current information, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends avoiding travel to China. Updated travel information related to 2019-nCoV can be found at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-china>. As of February 2, 2020, new screening protocols are being conducted for individuals entering the United States from China at certain airports. People who visited China and returned after February 2, 2020 may return to school or work unless a local health department decides that the individual must comply with a quarantine order.

With that being said, we would like to emphasize our district's commitment to an inclusive community. Individuals will not be excluded from school or school activities based on race, country of origin, or recent travel, including to any part of China. Diseases do not discriminate based on race or ethnicity. People of one race or ethnicity are no more likely to get coronavirus than any other.

While diagnosed cases have been limited in the United States, federal agencies are advising communities to prepare for the spread of this virus. We are staying up to date on information and recommendations in collaboration with government authorities and other educational institutions. We are reviewing our processes relating to contagious illnesses and will inform you if we decide to take any further steps, up to and including measures like school closures or canceling student trips.

There are currently no vaccines to protect against this virus. The New York State Department of Health (DOH) recommends utilizing the following ways to minimize the spread of all respiratory illnesses, including 2019-nCoV:

- 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 people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. If you use a tissue, throw it in the trash.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Because this is an ongoing, quickly evolving situation, we encourage you to keep up to date about 2019-nCoV, its treatment and prevention. For questions, please contact your local department of health or the NYS DOH's Coronavirus Hotline at 1-888-364-3065.

For the latest updates, please regularly check the CDC's dedicated 2019-nCoV website (<https://www.cdc.gov/nCov>), NYS DOH's dedicated 2019-nCoV website (<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>), and the CDC's Frequently Asked Questions and Answers page (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>).

We will continue to clearly communicate with our community about our ongoing efforts regarding 2019-n-CoV.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Eric Jay Rosser', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Eric Jay Rosser
Superintendent of Schools