



HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT
ONE LINCOLN AVENUE
HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY 08033

March 9, 2020

Greetings, Haddonfield Families.

Over the course of the last several weeks, news reports have brought concerns and confusion to citizens around the globe. Here in Haddonfield, we have watched as this new virus, Coronavirus COVID-19, spread from one country to the next. Our worry has been inflamed by reports of how quickly and easily the infection can be shared, as well as by images and statistics that prompt as many questions as answers.

One clear message has been that, although we should not panic, we must be prepared; prepared to be more vigilant about avoiding contamination, prepared to deal with more cases of the illness, and prepared for cancellations and closures.

It is on the subject of preparedness that I am writing to you today.

All New Jersey public school closures due to this virus will be guided by [a written directive from the New Jersey Department of Health](#) through the Camden County Office of Health and Human Services. It is only through that source that we will be required to close schools. As of this writing, we have no directive to close our schools; however, it is our responsibility to be prepared for that possibility because of the duration of the closure.

If the Haddonfield Board of Education is directed to close our schools, we need to be able to continue to educate our students. This kind of extensive “homeschooling” is virtually unheard of and could possibly be an enormous challenge to implement. In order to mitigate that challenge, we are going to hold a professional development day for our K-12 teachers to prepare for the possibility of teaching remotely.

With that in mind, and we are very sorry to do this with such short notice, all classes for students are cancelled for Monday, March 16th for a professional development day.

All students will have the day off while teachers, staff, and administrators spend the day planning for the possibility of “virtual classrooms” and at-home learning. This will not affect the school calendar; by that I mean we will not have to make up this day later in the year. Let’s call it a “snow day” without snow. I completely understand that, with a week’s notice, you have limited time to make plans for childcare, but we strongly believe that preparedness is our top priority, and that this plan is a must.

Faculty and staff will work on plans for electronic communication of lessons and/or for paper workbooks, depending on the age of the students and the subject matter. Teachers who require training in our learning management software platforms like Canvas and Google Classroom will receive it, and all staff will be given the time to confer and collaborate. Our special education department needs time to work out solutions for IEPs if students aren’t allowed in school. Since we have email addresses for all of you in Genesis, we are working under the assumption that all of our homes have Internet and computer access.

These are stressful times, I know, but the Board, our administrative team, teacher team, and I are committed to being as ready as possible and to continuing the education of your children in the event of a prolonged closure.

As for school trips planned for April and beyond, most are still ongoing, but we are watching carefully for travel closures to various cities.

Currently there are no adjustments to athletic events. In fact, on Monday, March 16th, all after-school events are still going on as planned. That said, we are closely following [guidance from the NJSIAA](#) on all athletic events, so this remains a fluid situation. In the event the Health Department mandates a school closing in Haddonfield, we will be working with them on the status of interscholastic athletics during that closure period.

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to our Public Information Director, Polly Mitchell at pmitchell@haddonfield.k12.nj.us. Remember, the very best way to combat this and any sickness is social distancing and cleanliness. It seems that our society went from a proper handshake at the start of this decade to a more medically appropriate elbow bump today.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we plan for extremely difficult circumstances in nearly uncharted waters for traditional public schools.

Sincerely,

Larry Mussoline, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DID YOU KNOW we have [a web page](#) dedicated to staying on top of the latest developments and recommendations related to Coronavirus COVID-19? The page also includes helpful resources for you and your children.