

# Island Park Schools

99 RADCLIFFE ROAD  
ISLAND PARK, NEW YORK 11558



PHONE (516) 434-2600  
FAX (516) 431-7550

DR. ROSMARIE T. BOVINO  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

February 27, 2020

Dear Families,

I am writing as follow-up to a meeting that I attended today with the Nassau County Health (NCDH) Commissioner, Lawrence Eisenstein M.D., regarding the novel Coronavirus (COVID 19).

As you know from media coverage, Coronavirus is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Symptoms include fever, cough and trouble breathing or shortness of breath. Thousands of cases have been confirmed in China and new cases have been diagnosed in a number of countries, including the U.S. To date, no case of the virus has been confirmed in New York State.

Dr. Eisenstein provided the following information:

- Doctors are familiar with a variety of common Coronaviruses; however, COVID 19 is a novel (new) strain. There are currently four types of common Coronaviruses transmitted person to person in the U.S. and most countries around the world. The common cold as well as SARS are in the family of Coronaviruses.
- Coronaviruses also cause a variety of diseases in animals and birds such as cows, pigs, and chickens. It is believed that a Coronavirus present in an animal jumped the species barrier to humans causing the new strain.
- Generally, the incubation period for common Coronaviruses is 2-5 days. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are being very conservative in their management of the disease by keeping individuals quarantined for up to 14 days from the first day of exposure.
- The NCDH is being alerted by the NYS Department of State when someone has been exposed to the illness and is being monitored or quarantined.
- Researchers at the University of Texas are developing a vaccine for the new Coronavirus, but it will take a minimum of one year until one is ready for distribution.

Dr. Eisenstein provided the following advice:

- The NCDH will alert school districts directly if there is cause for concern, including families in the district who have been exposed to the virus and are subject to quarantine.
- This is flu season and it is not too late for adults and children to be vaccinated for the flu. By vaccinating against the flu, more people can remain healthy. Fewer cases of flu will help lessen the demand on health care workers and other resources, should the new Coronavirus emerge.
- It is believed the new Coronavirus, like the flu, spreads through infected water droplets from coughs and sneezes, especially when people are within 6 feet of one another. Students must continue to be taught to cough and sneeze into a tissue that can be disposed of; however, if they do not have a tissue, they should cough and sneeze into their arm. All adults must model this behavior.
- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or cleaning hands with a sanitizer (of at least 60% alcohol) is the best defense against transmission. This is because infected water droplets from coughs and sneezes transmit germs when they enter someone else's eyes, nose or mouth. Because it is not known how long the virus "lives" on surfaces, we must not touch our eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed/unsanitized hands.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NYS Education Department (SED), and Nassau County Department of Health (NCDH) suggest:

- The risk to residents and students is low. At this time of year, there are many possible causes for respiratory illness. Therefore, there is no need to cancel school or students' social events, and there is no need for students or school staff to wear surgical masks at school.
- Schools should continue to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Please know that the District is working to keep our students and employees healthy by following established standard precautions. This includes daily cleaning and sanitizing protocols for high touch point areas as outlined by the CDC, SED, and NCDH.

We will keep you informed of any changes. Please visit our website and FB pages for timely communications.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosmarie T. Bovino". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Rosmarie T. Bovino, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools