



Pearl River School District

135 West Crooked Hill Road
Pearl River, New York 10965-2730

www.pearlriver.org

Phone: 845-620-3922 – Fax: 845-620-3927
pochintestam@pearlriver.org

Marco F. Pochintesta
Superintendent of Schools

March 13, 2020

Dear Pearl River School Community,

I am grateful to our school community for the support and understanding that has been demonstrated during this challenging time. The information that we are receiving regarding the Coronavirus is rapidly changing. Our schools are doing an excellent job at maintaining consistency for our students in our academic program. We are sensitive to the fact that children may be anxious and even frightened from the news about COVID-19. I commend our administration, faculty and staff for the social and emotional support they have provided for students.

Based on ongoing conversations with fellow Rockland County school superintendents, the New York State Education Department (NYSED), the Rockland County Department of Health and local elected officials regarding the health and safety of our students, staff and families, we are announcing the closure of all Pearl River School District buildings for students for three days. Students will return to class on Thursday, March 19, 2020 pending our assessment of the Coronavirus situation at that time.

- **Monday, March 16th will be a professional development day** for the Pearl River School District in lieu of Friday, March 20th. There will be no school for students. Only faculty and staff will report on this day where we will continue our work in planning for online student learning should the district be closed for an extended period of time due to Coronavirus.
- Pearl River Schools will use two snow days and be **CLOSED on Tuesday, March 17th and Wednesday, March 18th.**
- There will be no student activities on these three days. This includes all clubs and athletics.

Please note: At present, there are currently no confirmed cases of Coronavirus among the students or staff in the Pearl River School District.

The purpose of this collaborative action across all Rockland County school districts and Rockland BOCES is to allow additional time for curriculum organization and instructional planning in the event of a prolonged closure of our schools.

Based on future actions by Governor Cuomo and/or the New York State Interim Commissioner of Education, we may communicate additional changes to the school calendar including adjustments to school vacation and previously designated days.

In last evening's letter to the community I indicated that we are currently evaluating all school events and activities in order to be as proactive as possible in reducing the risk of exposure to the Coronavirus for our students, families, and staff while continuing with our regular school program.

At this time we are cancelling or postponing large group events, field trips and cancelling all facility use and events on weekends and after 5:30 PM weekdays. This will restrict activities to students and faculty and staff, and allow the district to better clean and disinfect the buildings in the evening.

When classes resume please note the following restrictions for school events, activities and field trips:

Field Trips- All field trips through April 30th are cancelled. A determination will be made for trips beyond that date.

Athletics- Spring sports practices will continue with practices ending by 5:30 PM. Interscholastic athletic competitions are suspended until further notice.

After School Activities- After schools clubs facilitated by our staff may continue, ending by 5:30 PM. Any after school activities run by individuals or agencies not employed by the school are cancelled until further notice.

All weekend activities taking place in the district are cancelled until further notice. This includes the MS marathon play rehearsal, and SAT scheduled for tomorrow, Saturday, March 14th.

Adult Enrichment Program- All classes taking place in school district buildings are cancelled effective Monday, March 16th. Classes taking place off-site are subject to cancellation from the hosting site. Refunds for courses will be issued on a prorated basis.

School events: All evening school events and meetings are cancelled or postponed. Schools will do their best to reschedule events depending upon availability.

Exceptions:

- Board of Education meetings will take place in the District Office as scheduled.
- Childcare in our elementary schools will continue as scheduled.

Please check our school calendar for specific information on cancellation of events.

While we have not had a confirmed case of Coronavirus in the Pearl River School District, we have been preparing in the event that we need to close schools. The District has updated their Pandemic Illness Plan and formed a Pandemic Illness Response Team. The team has met several times to identify needs and solutions in several key areas. We will continue to monitor the situation in our area.

In the meantime, if you or a member of your family is asked to self-quarantine by your employer, the Department of Health or a medical professional, we ask that you notify the District immediately by contacting the school nurse.

As always, we will continue to provide updates and share information regarding additional actions and announcements. Please know that we are in constant communication with the New York State Department of Education, the Rockland County Department of Health, local elected officials, and our superintendent colleagues, and we are all working together to provide clarity, consistency and support during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

