



# Pearl River School District

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

[www.pearlriver.org](http://www.pearlriver.org)

Phone: 845-620-3922 – Fax: 845-620-3927  
[pochintestam@pearlriver.org](mailto:pochintestam@pearlriver.org)

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**Marco F. Pochintesta**  
Superintendent of Schools

March 9, 2020

Dear Pearl River School Community,

The District has been working steadily to prepare for the challenges presented by a potential outbreak of the Coronavirus in our area. Working with Rockland BOCES, the district developed a Pandemic Illness Plan last week and activated a Pandemic Response Team consisting of district administrators to move our preparedness forward. We have expanded the span of the response team to facilitate our planning efforts with the addition of school administrators and health staff. The focus of our planning and preparation is to assure that the immediate needs of the schools are being met, and also to consider how we might continue the mission of educating our students in the event a long term closure is required by the Department of Health.

The District has mobilized to respond to the wide variety of issues that are part of a rapidly changing situation. The outline below covers our initial responses. We will update the community as other responses are enacted.

District Interventions for Responding to COVID-19:

## **Facilities**

- Since March 4<sup>th</sup>, enhanced daily cleaning protocols have been in place to prevent the potential spread of infection. This includes the use of NYS approved disinfectants and cleaners on hard surfaces such as handrails, doorknobs, water fountains, desks, faucets, etc. This weekend, all school buildings had an additional thorough cleaning and disinfecting.
- In our schools, signs are posted to remind students to wash their hands frequently, avoid touching their face, and to cover coughs with a tissue or their elbow. Teachers and nurses are instructing younger students how to wash their hands properly for at least 20 seconds (sing the ABCs or Happy Birthday song twice).

## **Academic Preparedness for Long-term closure**

- While nearly all of our MS and HS teachers are using Google classroom, our Director of Technology and technology coaches have developed tutorials and guidance for teachers on setting up a Google classroom where students can access instructional materials from home.

## **Business/Operations**

- We are monitoring our inventory and re-stocking supplies for sanitizing and cleaning.

- We are in regular communication with the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center for our technology support services, Aramark, our food service provider, and Chestnut Ridge Transportation, our transportation provider to understand their preparedness planning and response efforts.

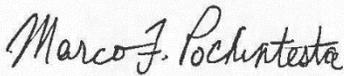
**Social/Emotional**

Our pupil personnel support staff assigned to each of our schools are aware of the needs of students as we confront this crisis. The District is engaged and invested in building our capacity to support students and we have increased the number of staff trained in mental health first aid. In order to assist parents in their discussions with children about this topic, please follow the link below to a parent resource from the National Association of School Psychologists for talking with children about COVID-19.

[Talking to Children about COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): A Parent Resource](#)

I wish that all of our Pearl River school community stay safe and healthy. Please be sure that I will notify you of any updates.

Sincerely,



Marco J. Pochintesta