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# *Haverhill Public Schools*

## *Office of the Superintendent*

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Friday, March 6, 2020

HPS School Community,

Like many of you, Haverhill Public Schools is tracking the frequent CDC and the Massachusetts' Department of Public Health updates and recommendations related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus), and in contact with our Haverhill Board of Health. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) has shared a guidance document for school administrators and school health personnel regarding coronavirus that we are using to guide our efforts in addition to our District Emergency plans.

Our School Physician, John Maddox, MD and Director of Health and Nursing Services, Katie Vozeolas, RN are in constant communication with our leadership team, and local and State agencies, and will continue to help us navigate changes in MDPH recommendations for schools. We recognize that it is unsettling to contemplate potentially needing to address cases of Coronavirus in our community, but want to assure you that Haverhill Public Schools will act with transparency and prudence, in efforts to keep our students and staff healthy.

As of this writing, in the US, there are approximately 115 cases confirmed. In Massachusetts, there has been one confirmed case of Coronavirus. It is important to remember that there have been no reported cases of Coronavirus in Haverhill to date.

Many of the recommendations from MDPH and CDC focus on preventative measures that are standard for any flu or cold virus, such as these simple precautions will help prevent the spread of the flu and other respiratory illnesses such as Coronavirus:

- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, using a tissue or the inside of your elbow
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water frequently and use hand sanitizer
- If you have a fever or feel sick, stay home and call your healthcare provider
- Get the flu vaccine – it is not too late! Find more information on the flu and where to get a flu vaccine here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/what-should-i-know-about-flu>

Our School Department efforts currently include:

1. Communicating regularly with the local Board of Health and closely tracking guidance changes from MDPH and CDC.
2. Complying with State and Federal guidelines for exclusion/self-quarantine of individuals who have travelled to a country identified as high risk of exposure, for 14 days.
3. Promoting standard prevention measures such as:
  - a. Handwashing (additional signage posted about importance of handwashing, teachers showing handwashing videos)
  - b. Teaching students to “cover your cough”
  - c. Adhering to exclusion and dismissal guidelines (keep your child home with any fever over 100 degrees, students with fever over 100 will be dismissed and must remain home at least 24 hours, and until fever has resolved without aid of medication).
4. Monitoring attendance of students and staff, and developing contingency plans to address staff absences.

5. Continue our standard cleaning and disinfection protocols, including the use of the electrostatic disinfection sprayers.
6. Evaluating need to modify or reschedule international/overnight trips
7. Keeping you informed!

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in Massachusetts, check the following website: [mass.gov/2019coronavirus](https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus).

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Margaret Marotta', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Margaret Marotta, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools