

March 11, 2020

Dear Boston Public Schools Community:

Boston Public Schools (BPS), together with city and health officials, is continuing to closely monitor the evolving health crisis related to the coronavirus. The following information is the best information and recommendation we have available as of today. As the coronavirus continues to spread, a small number of schools and universities throughout the country, including in Massachusetts, have closed for a day or more. Understandably, families are beginning to ask if the Boston Public Schools will be closing some or all of our schools soon.

Based on the information we have today, medical experts, including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) do not recommend school closures in Boston at this time. Doctors and public health officials know most about how to protect the public from health-related concerns and we will continue to rely on their advice and guidance. For the most up-to-date information and preventative measures on how to stay healthy, visit bphc.org or bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus.

We understand that some parents may choose, out of an abundance of caution, to keep their child at home despite the recommendations of public health experts. If parents do decide not to send their child to school, the absence must be accompanied by a parent/guardian letter or email to the school. These absences will be excused.

BPS is also taking additional actions to ensure the cleanliness of our buildings and our buses. Our schools are undergoing increased cleaning, extra precautions are in place for high-standard food preparation, and a dedicated team of adults is focused on keeping children safe. I have also asked school principals to personally monitor the bathrooms a minimum of three times per day to ensure there is adequate soap. If soap dispensers are running low or are broken, teachers, school staff and students should notify a custodian or a school staff member.

We are continuing to work together with city and health officials to do what is best for students and families and we will continue to update you as information becomes available.

We cannot emphasize this enough: **our first priority at BPS is the health and well-being of our students and families.** This will be our primary focus as we continue to monitor the situation closely with our public health experts and determine the most effective way to address this ongoing public health concern.

Sincerely,



Dr. Brenda Cassellius
Superintendent