

Corona Virus School Update – March 8, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Before we return to school tomorrow I want to reach out to share what limited new information we have about COVID-19 and our schools. Our custodial staff and technology staff spent all of Saturday and all of today doing a thorough, deep cleaning of our buildings, classrooms and common spaces. I want to thank them publicly for quickly changing their weekend plans with their families so that they could be here in Dobbs Ferry working furiously for many hours undertaking this herculean task. Although this is only a precautionary measure, I know that all of our families and staff feel better knowing that we are now at a “sanitary baseline” from which we can work moving forward. We are following all the most current guidelines for environmental cleaning under guidance from the CDC. I encourage you to review the many resources on the District website <https://www.dfsd.org/Domain/613> where we continue to add and update information as we receive it.

Our local school districts continue to struggle with receiving the kinds of guidance and direction that we need from local and state officials. The Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents and the Southern Westchester Chief School Administrators Association continue to push for answers to our questions about school closings. Currently, it is my understanding from the State Department of Health, that we will be proactively contacted by them should there be a case that would require the closing of our schools. Our school physicians, Pediatrics on Hudson, have been extremely helpful with providing information and immediately answering any of our questions.

Currently, we are operating in a “business as usual” mode until we are directed to do something differently by either the State or County Departments of Health. It is unbelievable that schools have had absolutely no communication from the New York State Education Department (SED) except to inform us of a requirement to notify them if we are closing our schools. We are well prepared in Dobbs Ferry should we need to resort to a distance learning solution at some time in the future. Our teachers and students in grades 6-12 are well versed in the use of Google Classroom and we have already begun to identify a variety of possible solutions for our students at Springhurst.

Now more than ever, we are trying to stick with the facts and operate logically, methodically and carefully. In our Dobbs Ferry School community at present, we do not have any known parents, staff or students who are exhibiting Coronavirus symptoms or who have been quarantined or isolated. Obviously this is a situation that can change at anytime and we will act according to the direction that we receive from medical and health authorities if and when the need arises.

I will, of course, continue to keep you updated.

Sincerely,

Lisa Brady, Ed.D.