

## COVID-19 Information

- The Pinelands Regional School District will not hesitate to take whatever action is necessary to protect the health and safety of our students and staff. We may receive directives and/or guidance from the state Department of Education, county and state health officials and the Centers for Disease Control, and we utilize that guidance to make decisions based on **what is best for OUR own community**.

As we monitor the prevalence and impact of the [COVID-19 virus](#), the **Pinelands Regional School District is committed to providing real-time updates on this page** to our COVID-19 response plans and decisions. Believing rumors or information presented on social media can heighten anxiety and create confusion. **Please be sure to consult this page**, district/school websites and official district communications and resources for **factual information** on situations as they may arise.

## COVID-19 Action Plan

- **What if We Need to Close our Schools?**

On March 5, 2020, the NJ Department of Education advised all districts that IF we are required by the Department of Health to close schools due to a health concern related to COVID-19, we would be permitted to utilize home instruction to satisfy our instructional requirements.

- **Please complete our STUDENT ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY AT HOME FORM on the Parent Portal. This form is crucial to allowing teachers to understand how to best teach and support each student should home instruction be necessary.**

We are in the process of creating those home instruction contingency plans, which could include direct services and assignments and online instruction (see question below for more details). This means that once our home instruction plan is approved, IF state health officials direct us to close, we would NOT be required to make up those days in the calendar.

## **What is the District's Home Instruction Plan?**

We are in the process of developing our home instruction contingency plan and we will release it once it is approved. Our plan will take into consideration that students and staff have varied levels of access to technology devices and have varied levels of connectivity in their homes. Our plan will also be inclusive of all learners.

## **What if I Don't Have Internet Access or a Computer at Home?**

Our home instruction plan will provide multiple and varied ways students can receive instruction. Please be sure to fill out our Student Access to Technology at Home form to let us know your level of connectivity.

## **How Will a Decision to Close Schools be Made?**

The decision to close a school is made in consultation with local health officials and/or the Department of Education. If such an action becomes necessary, we would notify our parents the same way we do if we have a "snow day," i.e. phone call, email and website posting.

## **What About Large Community Events, Sporting Events and Field Trips?**

At this time, we do not see the need to alter our plans for upcoming large community gatherings, including auditorium events, sporting events and field trips. This may change if the need exists.

It is incredibly important for us all to follow **proper health and safety protocols** during these large gatherings.

## **The governor declared a State of Emergency on March 9, 2020. What does this mean for our schools?**

This declaration does NOT impact how we operate our schools and it is NOT a directive to close schools. The declaration of a "State of Emergency" allows state agencies and departments to utilize state resources to assist affected communities.

In [Gov. Murphy's State of Emergency video](#) on Twitter, he explains that for the vast majority of New Jerseyans "...this declaration will have no immediate impact on daily life. New Jerseyans can still move around freely in the state

and go to work and school in accordance with employer and school district guidance."

For more information, see Gov. Murphy's [State of Emergency video](#). Or visit the [Governor's State of Emergency notification](#).

## Staying Healthy

- **As a Parent, What Should I be Doing?**
  - **Complete the Student Access to Technology at Home Form on the portal**
  - Stay informed by visiting this page for real-time updates and official district information;
  - If necessary, plan for child care arrangements if a school closure is deemed necessary.

**Please also review with your child the importance of hand washing and preventative health measures, namely the advice below.**

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or into your sleeve, not your hands;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Wash hands often with soap and water - for at least 20 seconds - especially before eating or after going to the bathroom, blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing;
- Keep your children home when they are sick. Children should not return to school unless they have been fever-free without medication for 24 hours;
- Avoid people who are sick;
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces and objects.

### **What is the district doing to prevent exposure to our students and staff?**

The Pinelands Regional School District is continuing the enhanced daily cleaning and sanitizing of our schools, including disinfecting all door knobs, desks, bathroom fixtures, and other frequently shared items. In addition, our bus drivers will be wiping down all bus seats on a regular basis. Our

precautions also include the safe handling of money in our cafeterias. We are also:

- o Making sure we have tissues and hand sanitizers available to all students and staff;
- o Directing students to wash and/or sanitize their hands before going to lunch and after blowing their nose or using a tissue.
- o Performing daily inspections of student bathrooms to ensure there is adequate soap and paper towels available;
- o Monitoring student and staff illnesses to ensure only healthy people are coming to school.

## COVID-19 Resources

- [COVID-19 Resources and Information from the NJ Department of Health](#)  
[NJDOH Resources for the General Public](#)  
[COVID-19 Resources and Information from the CDC](#)  
[CDC: Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Commun](#)