



Mrs. Helen E. Payne
Superintendent

Mrs. Amy Lerner
School Business Administrator

March 12, 2020

Dear Parents and Community Members,

This is a lengthy, but very important update on how COVID19 is affecting our school community. North Hanover Township School District continues to collaborate with the County Health Department, Northern Burlington Regional Schools District partners and other community partners to monitor our response to the Coronavirus/ COVID19. Daily updates from our county Department of Health guide our decision making and we are actively monitoring, preparing and responding to the pandemic and its implications for our schools.

I am aware that there are schools closing across the nation. We are making preparations for that possibility, if it becomes necessary. As of the date of this letter, there is no community spread of COVID19 in our county and our school district is NOT being asked to close. If our school district receives a written directive from the Department of Health and is advised to close, we would activate our plans for remote learning. With that said, we need your help in thinking ahead as we create a contingency plan.

Check the Parent Portal on Genesis

If you haven't yet logged into your Genesis account please do so. Use these links to access both the [portal](#) and the [portal instructions](#). Genesis feeds our notification system, so we need to have your correct information in there. Please note the following:

- Your account is automatically set up based upon the email account you have given the district and you currently receive communications from the district and school.
- **Please review all information on the Contacts screen in the portal to ensure we have up to date contact information for you.**
- Your username is your email address (all lowercase). If you do not remember your password, please click on the "forgot my password" button.
- Once you do this an email will be sent to you. Please be patient. If you do not receive this email within 20-30 minutes, please email Lisa Quackenboss at lquackenboss@nhanover.com.

Student Access to Devices at Home

We are in the process of creating a remote learning plan so students can continue their school work from home in the event that we are required to close. This is necessary to fulfill the 180 day requirement without adding the days to the end of the year. Please respond to this survey to let us know ONLY if you do NOT have a device (laptop, desktop, Chromebook, etc) in your home that connects to the Internet.. [This survey](#) consists of only a couple of questions and will take very little of your time.



We will follow up in a separate communication with specific instructions about how to help your child access electronic learning materials through Google Classroom and our district website if a school closure actually becomes necessary.

Have a Plan

In the event that there is an overnight or sudden need to close schools, please have a family plan in place to respond to that. I appreciate that this would be a very difficult situation for our families and do not take that decision responsibility lightly, nor do our partners at the Department of Health. As of the date of this letter, we are not anticipating a school closure. However, the situation is very fluid and can change at any time.

If a closure becomes necessary, you will receive further instructions about remote learning. You will also receive a survey regarding school nutrition. Please be on the lookout for these things.

Before and After School Care

As we do on inclement weather days, the before and after school care programs will be closed if schools are closed. If school is open, those programs will remain open.

Our children, families and community are so important to us and we have been actively working to establish and enforce enhanced protocols to keep everyone healthy. Please note the following very important information.

Our Facilities

Our facility staff is continuing to clean and disinfect all common touch points throughout the schools as part of their routine flu season cleaning schedules. We are also using higher concentrated cleaning products and specialized equipment so that our facilities and buses are sanitized. Teachers are being vigilant about handwashing and we are educating and reminding students about the effective way to do this.

School Activities and Access to Our Buildings

- As a proactive step to prioritize keeping our facilities open for students, we are suspending all indoor building use by outside organizations, effective at the end of the school day, March 13, 2020. We are holding our custodial staff to very high standards for cleaning and disinfecting, and this restriction is necessary for them to accomplish that. This restriction will stay in effect until April 30, 2020 and will then be re-evaluated.
- With a heavy heart, effective March 13, 2020, we are restricting building access at all times to only our students and staff, other than for student drop off and pick up or a meeting requested by a staff member. While we welcome and cherish seeing our families and visitors in our buildings under ordinary circumstances, these are simply not ordinary times. Please understand that our aim is to keep our schools as contained as possible so that they can stay open to serve the educational needs of our children. This applies to all volunteers and school related organizations like our PTOs and parent groups. This restriction will be in effect through the end of April and will then be re-evaluated.



- School sponsored events that are off campus are being postponed through April, as are school events that bring people in to our schools. This includes all field trips, the school play, scheduled concerts, assemblies, etc.
- **School sponsored programs that involve only our staff and students, like play practice and the after school math club, will continue as planned. Additionally, our sixth graders will still visit Northern Burlington Middle School tomorrow.**

It is my fervent hope that we will be able to reschedule these postponed activities at a later date and that all of the wonderful, fun and enriching experiences our students participate in are once again happening.

Please Continue to Monitor Health at Home

We continue to count on our families and staff to be extra vigilant in monitoring their health. Please do **NOT** send children to school if they are unwell. Students and staff should not return to school until they are fever free and feeling well for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. If anyone in your house is quarantined and becomes symptomatic, please DO NOT send your child to school.

Travel Guidelines

If you return from travel to any high risk area, or any overseas travel, we ask that you contact the school nurse and building principal before returning to school. If you have family or close contacts returning from these locations, we ask that you also contact us. Advice on the affected locations and the extent to which individuals and contacts should be quarantined is ever-changing, so we rely on you to prioritize the health of our entire school community by keeping us informed and following the advice that we receive from the Department of Health and CDC. Please help us to err on the side of caution.

Talking to Children

I am the parent of an elementary school child and a middle school child, and I understand how difficult it is to reassure our children during anxious times. To help guide your discussion, please see the advice of the National Association of School Psychologists, Talking to Children about COVID-19.

We will keep you updated on any new developments and greatly appreciate your assistance in working with us as we strive to keep our students, families, and staff healthy.

Sincerely,

Helen Payne

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