

# Mendham Township School District

18 West Main Street - Post Office Box 510  
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Salvatore M. Constantino, Ed.D.  
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Mrs. Karyn Monaghan  
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March 6, 2020

To the Mendham Township School Community,

The Mendham Township School District is committed to ensuring the health and safety of students and staff in our buildings. The district is actively monitoring updates and recommendations provided by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and is prepared to implement any requirements from these organizations. Presently, the NJDOH is recommending that school districts reinforce standard procedures for preventing seasonal respiratory illness/infections and specifically recommends the following steps:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wash hands often for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, if soap and water are not available.
- Stay home when you are sick and avoid people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Over the last few days, I have been on conference calls with Governor Murphy and New Jersey's Commissioners of Health and Education, as well as County and Local Officials. During the calls, officials again stressed universal precautions at school and home to prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses. They also spoke to the need for preparation. Some of the procedures we are implementing in both schools include:

- School principals and nurses are tracking attendance patterns daily. We will be doing enhanced follow up on the reasons for absences, so that we can track current illnesses in both buildings.
- Custodians have engaged in heightened disinfecting protocols. At regular intervals, bathrooms, doorknobs, sinks, exit door push bars, and common surfaces are disinfected throughout the day.
- Soap dispensers and hand sanitizers are checked constantly.
- Bus drivers have been directed to wipe down their buses daily.
- The cafeteria is cleaned carefully between each lunch and tables are disinfected.

The NJ Department of Health and Department of Education released a memo late last night, where they advised, "schools may be asked to close preemptively or reactively, therefore schools should be making plans for what to do if there are recommendations for closing schools or cancelling events." They did suggest however that there was "no need

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to cancel school or social events” at this time. In the days and weeks ahead we may have to adjust these plans as conditions change. Upcoming trips and events are actively being discussed, and we will communicate any decisions as soon as they are available. Our efforts will be guided by school district policies and directives from the NJDOH and the NJDOE. We are prepared to comply with directions from state and local health agencies and adjust our plans as needed. Administration will continue to work with teacher leadership and governmental authorities to consider options for a variety of scenarios.

Situations like this are unpredictable, which can be stressful for people of any age. Advice in helping children can be found in a variety of places online; these are but a few resources:

[World Health Organization](#)

[National Association of School Psychologists](#)

[Child Mind Institute](#)

We are committed to supporting students’ families and staff in whatever manner we can, and we encourage you to reach out to your child’s guidance counselor if you feel they can be of assistance.

I will continue to do my best to keep you informed as we move forward. District communications will be available on the District website, and families are encouraged to ensure they are receiving all District alerts. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to my office or to your Principal, if we can help in any way.

Sincerely,

Salvatore M. Constantino, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Additional resources you may find helpful are:

- 1-800-222-1222 - This is the number for the NJDOH’s 24-hour public hotline. Trained healthcare professionals are standing by to answer questions about coronavirus.
- [New Jersey Department of Health](#)
- [Morris County Department of Health](#)
- [Center for Disease Control](#)

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