

Dear Families, Employees and Community Leaders,

North Baltimore Local Schools takes the safety and wellbeing of our students, employees and families very seriously. Our school district is carefully monitoring the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) situation via information provided by the Wood County Health Department, Ohio Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Wood County Health Department has a public health emergency preparedness team that includes an infectious disease expert, an emergency response planner, communication specialists and other public health officials who are trained and ready to respond. Additionally, the Ohio Department of Education has begun to communicate about this topic with local school districts.

School districts ultimately fall under the control of the Ohio and Wood County Health Departments and CDC when it comes to communicable diseases. The Ohio Department of Education would ultimately be involved in addressing current rules and guidelines in the event of a closure.

With cases of COVID-19 being reported around the world and here in the United States, we wish to share that our school district is focusing on cleaning procedures and preventative practices to keep students, employees and our community healthy and safe. A few examples are adding hand washing breaks during the school day for younger students, sanitizing school buses and extra cleaning of high-touch surfaces during the school day. The Wood County Health Department recommends taking these and other steps as precautionary measures.

On a daily basis, what we know about this outbreak is changing rapidly as updates are shared from across the country. It is important to find appropriate and trusted sources of information to learn what precautions should be taken. Please rest assured that we will stay current on all pertinent information and we will keep you up-to-date. At this time, the most important thing that families can work on is general emergency preparedness, including making sure you have two weeks' worth of canned and/or frozen food available, have a plan for childcare if schools and daycare facilities close (such as touching base with relatives, neighbors and friends now to create a plan) and teaching children old enough to be home alone how to do essential things like lock the doors and reach the fire department.

We would like to share some information from the Wood County Health Department:

Risk to the general public remains low, and the CDC continues to recommend Americans use typical infectious disease precautions, just as those used to prevent cold or flu:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose or eyes.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your arm or a tissue.

- Avoid exposure to others who are sick, and stay at home if you are ill.
- Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals for a healthy immune system.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Please reinforce these preventative measures at home and make sure you are modeling them as well.

As a school district, we have been formulating a plan in the event the Wood County Health Department would require us to shut down. The plan would provide students an opportunity to continue learning if schools were to be closed for an extended period. We have a highly-trained and professional staff who will be utilizing the tools that are available to continue the learning process. In grades PK-12, some of our students would be relying on their devices to access class materials via Google Classroom. Other teachers will be sending home two weeks of work for the students to complete on paper. This would be done if we are ordered to shut down for a two week period. Teachers will be available by e-mail.

In the event of a long-term closure, there is no doubt that it would be disruptive to families, students and employees as well as to the learning process. We wish to assure you that we have a plan in place should this impact our community, and that we are vigilant in following preventative measures to do our best to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for students as well as employees. We will update you if there are any changes.

Sincerely,
Ryan Delaney
Superintendent
North Baltimore Local Schools