



Pasco County Schools

Kurt S. Browning, Superintendent of Schools
7227 Land O' Lakes Boulevard • Land O' Lakes, Florida 34638

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

March 12, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As the global coronavirus outbreak rapidly evolves, Pasco County Schools (PCS) is continuing to follow the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Florida Department of Health. We are working together with our local Health Department officials to protect our school community, slow the spread of the virus, and help ensure students have a safe and healthy learning environment. It is our hope that the following information will assist you in making the best decisions for you and your family moving forward.

As of today, the District has no confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) within our school system, but we are aware of a single confirmed case outside of our system in the Pasco County community. We understand that members of our school community may have had varying levels of potential contact with individuals who have displayed symptoms of illness and/or have been diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19), and we are working closely with the CDC and Health Department to respond appropriately to any such disclosures that are made to us. We are asking all members of our school community to understand that should such disclosures be made to the District, staff will be limited in the type and amount of student or employee specific information that can be shared. That being said, we want to assure all of our students, parents, and employees that the District would not knowingly allow any student or employee who has tested positive or who is presenting with symptoms of the coronavirus (COVID-19) to attend school unless and until they are cleared by a qualified medical professional.

To this point, the District has not been made aware of any circumstances that would require the closure of any of our schools or facilities. The District's After School Enrichment Programs (PLACE) will remain open as scheduled through Spring Break, and any changes to this schedule will be communicated.

We understand that this situation is fluid, and we are therefore taking the proactive measure of conducting training for distance learning with our staff on Monday, March 23, prior to the planned return of students from Spring Break. While all of our schools are scheduled to resume normal class operations on Tuesday, March 24, we want to be prepared with a distance learning option should the CDC or Health Department indicate to us that a school closure is necessary.

We are asking students and families to adhere to the most recent state and federal guidance if someone in their household is traveling/has traveled to areas with travel advisories due to coronavirus (COVID-19). Information can be found through the following links:

CDC Guidelines - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

Florida Department of Education Guidance - <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/COVID-19/index.html>

Please keep in mind that travel notices are changing almost daily, and we encourage you to check these links regularly.

As a result of the above guidance, student absences will be excused, and every effort will be made to keep your child(ren) up to date on their work. Additionally, PCS will be suspending all awards, recognitions, and activities associated with perfect attendance for the remainder of the school year. This action aligns with recommendations provided by the CDC, which has advised that perfect attendance incentives are often

counterproductive to efforts designed to stop the spread of illness. Through this decision, we are encouraging those who are sick to stay home, thereby helping to reduce the spread of illness.

To help protect yourself and the school community, the following are recommendations provided by the CDC to reduce the spread of respiratory illness:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then dispose of the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the restroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Avoiding areas with increased risk and following CDC guidance are critical as we work together to implement preventive strategies. I trust we can count on your support to help reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus.

The District has been collecting useful resources for employees and parents on its webpage at <https://www.pasco.k12.fl.us/ssps/page/student-health-illness-prevention>. Please continue to check the District's website and social media accounts for updates.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we work together for the health and safety of all.

Sincerely,



Kurt S. Browning
Superintendent of Schools

Cc:

Mike Napier, Health Officer, Department of Health
County Administrator, Dan Biles
Commissioner Ron Oakley, Pasco County, District 1
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