March 6, 2020

Dear Parents,

In my March Spotlight, I wrote an article entitled, “The CDC is Urging Schools to Prepare for the Coronavirus.” As of the release of my Spotlight last Friday, the New Jersey Department of Education had not yet provided specific guidance on this matter. That said, the Little Silver School District had already begun to take a proactive approach.

The New Jersey Department of Education released guidance regarding requirement for public health-related school closures following the New Jersey Department of Health’s (NJDOH) published guidance for K-12 schools regarding the impact that the current outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) might have on their communities. That guidance is available on the NJDOH’s COVID-19 Information for Schools and Businesses webpage.

The guidance emphasizes that the most important thing for schools to do now is plan and prepare. Among other planning procedures, the guidance advises that “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.”

To better assist boards of education, NJDOE has provided the following guidance regarding requirements for public health-related school closures. Specifically, only in the event that a board of education is provided a written directive by either the NJDOH or the health officer of the jurisdiction to institute a public health-related closure will any form of “remote learning” be counted toward our 180 day school requirement. Should a school opt to close independent of a written directive from the NJDOH or health officer of jurisdiction, we would essentially be using a “snow-day-type” closing.

This virus is of concern and comes with many layers of issues. I am working with Monmouth County Superintendents to ensure we collectively plan accordingly. In order to communicate regarding this issue, we have placed a separate Quicklink on the district’s homepage. As information becomes available, it can easily be found there.

Thank you for your patience as we maneuver through this challenging situation.

Sincerely,

Carolyn M. Kossack
Superintendent of Schools