FAIRVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT 72
7040 Laramie Avenue – Skokie, IL. 60077 – (847) 929-1050 – Fax: (847) 929-1060

March 10, 2020

Dear Niles Township Families:

All the public school districts that serve the students of Niles Township, including Niles Township District for Special Education, have been working collaboratively to monitor developments in our community regarding COVID-19 (the coronavirus). We have been in ongoing communication with the Skokie Health Department, which provides us guidance on specific questions we have, and have also been following updates from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Cook County Public Health Department, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

As of this morning, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our community, and our goal is to continue our students' academic days as normally scheduled and with no interruption. That being said, we are proactively preparing so we can keep students and our staff members safe. In the event that conditions change, we will work with our local health agencies and with each other to keep you informed of the steps we are taking in response. We have been fielding questions from family members who would like to know what steps we are currently taking to keep students safe, what plans we will implement if we need to close school, and if we have any special information about spring break. We'll address those areas in this letter.

<u>What are we doing to keep our students and staff healthy?</u>

We ask all students and staff who are exhibiting fever or virus symptoms to stay home. This includes fever or coughing. Our teachers and staff members will work with your student to make up work if they need to miss school.

As you do to prevent any respiratory virus, we recommend everyday practices that will help keep you healthy and avoid illness. Please remember the following good health habits:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap is not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Do not share water bottles or similar containers.
- Visit a doctor if you have a fever, cough, body aches, and/or fatigue.
- If you or a family member is sick, stay home and limit contact with others.

If you feel sick and are wondering about your condition, **contact your personal physician.**

Will there be school closures?

We will follow the direction provided by the IDPH, Skokie Health Department and CDC in order to make any decisions such as closing a school building or canceling large events. At this time, the Skokie Health Department does not recommend that we alter our school days or regularly scheduled school activities. Because of the gravity of COVID-19, the Skokie Health Department will alert us if there are any changes in their recommendations.

Similar to school closings for weather, our school calendars include up to 5 emergency make- up days at the end of the year which may need to be used if schools are closed. The districts are having conversations about alternative lessons, which would be district-specific.

What about Spring Break travel?

If families plan to travel over spring break, we recommend they monitor the CDC website, which includes information about COVID-19, and provides up-to-date travel information about specific locations. Here is the website:
https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices#travel-notice-definitions

The following information comes from the State Superintendent of the Illinois State Board of Education:

Can districts exclude students, staff, or volunteers for 14 days if they present at school after having visited a region affected by the virus?

No. If a student, staff member, or volunteer presents at school with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing after visiting an affected region, school authorities should immediately notify the local health department.

Districts cannot exclude or deny enrollment or education to students who are residents of the district due to travel considerations. Enrollment or exclusion decisions cannot be made using a student's travel history, and a district should not inquire as to a student's travel history for enrollment purposes. Decisions to quarantine students must be made by state or local public health officials. Districts must not apply standards that may be discriminatory for only one group of students.

If a student, staff member, or volunteer calls ahead and reports a history of travel to one of the affected geographic locations within the last 14 days and has concerning symptoms, collect detailed history over the phone prior to deciding the location for triage. School authorities should contact their local health department immediately.

What if I have additional questions?

If you have additional questions about your school, please contact your school's principal or health office.

Here are links to some agency websites that provide valuable information:

Link to Skokie Health Department coronavirus update

Link to Centers for Disease Control coronavirus information

Link to Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) coronavirus information

Link to Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) coronavirus FAQs (IDPH)

Link to State of Illinois Board of Education coronavirus guidance for schools

Link to CDC's Traveler's Health Notice

Link to a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation video with helpful information about coronavirus as found on the Skokie Public Health Department website

Sincerely,

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