Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak School Closure

URGENT UPDATE – MARCH 14, 2020

Parents/Guardians, Faculty/Staff, and Community:

The information surrounding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak is evolving rapidly. This unprecedented situation requires us to make decisions in real time as we respond to the most current public health crisis guidance. Given the Governor’s message on the inevitability of directed school closings, and after consultation with the Executive County Superintendent as well as the Ocean County Health Department on the increased activity of the Coronavirus; we will be closing schools Monday, March 16th and anticipate being closed through Friday, March 27th. However, we will evaluate weekly and update all accordingly. We will be implementing our home instruction remote learning preparedness plan in an effort to be proactive in combating the spread of this virus. This plan will go into effect Monday, March 16th will remain in place until school reopens. Further information regarding the remote learning plan will be made available to parents via Blackboard and the District website by Monday, March 16th. I cannot stress enough that the intent of the school closure is to adhere to guidelines urging us to avoid large gatherings of 250+ people and promote practicing social distancing; thereby limiting the spread of the Coronavirus to the high-risk populations.

Although no one in our school community has tested positive for the Coronavirus at this time, we recognize that we have a potential health risk and a community responsibility. The positive is that we are prepared with a remote instruction plan. Administration will make any needed adjustments to this plan. During this time, schools will be closed to all activities for a thorough cleaning to take place. This time should be used for continued learning.

Communication from the New Jersey Department of Education expressed an expectation for school districts to sustain and continue learning for the undetermined period of closure. Students are expected to engage in their instruction on a regular basis. Assignments will be monitored and faculty will be available via remote communication. In addition to virtual instruction vehicles (i.e., Google Classroom, etc.), physical packets consisting of materials and resources will be prepared for our younger learners and students who lack access. As per the NJDOE, related and compensatory services such as OT/PT, Speech, etc., cannot be provided through this remote home instruction. However, to assist students in maintaining skills already developed, related service providers will be available via remote communication to share at-home supplemental activities that students can complete. Administrators, faculty, CST members, counselors, nurses, etc. will be available to communicate with students and parents via email.

We will continue to work closely with officials and we will continue to update you through email and on our District webpage. We all need to do our part in order to help put an end to the spread of this virus. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we all work together through these trying times. May you, your family, and the entire community stay safe and healthy.

Dr. Thomas G. Farrell, Superintendent of Schools