



## TWINSBURG CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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March 9, 2020

Dear Twinsburg Schools Family:

As you may have heard, there are now three (3) confirmed cases of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus, in Ohio. Reports indicate that the three individuals diagnosed with this illness are from Cuyahoga County. News reports continue to raise concerns regarding COVID-19. Since my original email to you regarding COVID-19 dated February 28<sup>th</sup>, we have been working behind the scenes to establish District protocols that will be implemented in the event of a school or District closure caused by COVID-19. The purpose for this letter is to provide you with information related to COVID-19. I truly believe that we can all remain calmer if we understand the situation and can acknowledge that plans are being developed to address a potential outbreak in our community.

During a conference with the Summit County Public Health Department, school superintendents were advised that individuals who have a fever of 100.4 and higher and who are experiencing respiratory ailments should contact their primary healthcare physician. Physicians may not make appointments with the ill individual but may diagnose the person as "presumptive positive" for COVID-19. The physician may advise the individual to remain at home to heal. If conditions worsen, the individual may be advised to call ahead to the nearest emergency room before proceeding there, so that the emergency room personnel can be ready for the patient.

The Summit County Public Health Department advised school superintendents to begin practicing social distancing. Social distancing is a term applied to certain actions in efforts to slow down the spread of highly contagious diseases, such as COVID-19. Social distancing measures can include limiting large groups of individuals coming together at one time or seating individuals every other row, such as in an auditorium. Further, school superintendents are asked to discourage our staff and students from shaking hands, hugging, and other close body contact.

In addition to seeking guidance from the Summit County Public Health Department, our District has taken the following actions:

- We hosted a meeting that included school superintendents from our neighboring school districts as well as those affiliated through the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center (CVCC). The reason for this meeting was to discuss our school districts' protocols and practices as they relate to school closures due to a contagious disease so that responses to an outbreak of COVID-19 can be strategic and similar;
- We are monitoring information being released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Ohio Department of Health and the Summit County Public Health Department on a regular basis to ensure we are implementing recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses;

- We have reviewed our emergency operations plan (EOP) and are adapting operational protocols that apply specifically to COVID-19;
- We are monitoring student and staff attendance rates;
- We are monitoring daily reporting information from state agencies regarding cases of COVID-19 in Ohio;
- Earlier today, we met with officials from the City of Twinsburg, Twinsburg Township, the Village of Reminderville, and the Twinsburg Public Library to share information and to discuss our community response to a potential COVID-19 outbreak;
- We engaged PSI in a discussion regarding expected protocols should an adult or child become ill while at school. PSI is our contracted service vendor through which we are provided our District nurse and our health clinic personnel;
- We displayed posters in our schools which illustrate good hygiene practices;
- Building custodians and janitorial staff members wipe down high-touch surfaces such as desktops and door handles on a daily basis using disinfectant;
- Hand sanitizers are available in school cafeterias and high traffic locations;
- In addition, the District uses an electrostatic disinfectant sprayer at each school. The sprayer is used on a regular periodic basis after school hours and is used to mitigate cold and flu viruses. Two electrostatic disinfectant sprayers are also being used in our Transportation Department for our school buses and vans;
- District administrators and union leadership met to discuss staff expectations in the event of a school or District closure due to COVID-19;
- Building principals have engaged teachers in discussions regarding the continued delivery of instruction in the event a school or District is closed due to COVID-19; and
- Tomorrow morning, I am meeting with District administrators and with our building principals to continue to develop our plan and communication for our parents/guardians which will explain how the Twinsburg City School District will continue educating our students in the event of a closure. The development of this plan is being done in collaboration with the Twinsburg Education Association and our faculty. Considerations are being given for instruction based upon grade bands and the availability of electronic devices and the internet.

As a reminder, the CDC recommends every day actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes, and mouth;
- Stay home when you are sick;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe; and
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least twenty (20) seconds, especially after using the restroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing and/or sneezing.

School nursing staff work in collaboration with District administrators to ensure that protocols are in place to address students who exhibit signs of colds or viruses. To that end, it is very important for our parents/guardians to communicate with school and nursing staff members when their children come down with colds or viruses. If your child becomes ill, please be sure to contact the school office and report his/her absence. Absences due to illness are excused absences. Please be specific with regard to the reason(s) for your child's absence so that we can monitor the types of illnesses being experienced by our students. For example, please do not just indicate that your child will be absent because he/she is ill. Rather, please be specific and indicate if he/she has a cold, has a fever, has a sore throat, has the flu, etc. I encourage you to keep your child at home if he or she is ill. Children should be "fever free" for twenty-four hours before returning to school.

I thought you may be interested in parent resources regarding COVID-19:

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

We will post these articles on the District website. Please refer to the District website for updated information.

This is an evolving situation. We continue to stay abreast of the latest information from the CDC, the Summit County Public Health Department and the Ohio Department of Health. If a decision needs to be made about closing the Twinsburg City School District due to COVID-19, it will be made after consulting with the Summit County Public Health Department and the Ohio Department of Health.

I will continue to update you with information as it is released and as we continue to develop our District response. Updates will be forwarded to you via Blackboard Connect as well as through posts on the District website.

Thanks for your continued partnership with our school district. Together, we can ensure that our students and staff members continue to learn and to work in a healthy environment.

Sincerely,  
Kathi Powers, Superintendent