



455 County Street – New Bedford, MA 02740  
Superintendent Thomas Anderson

March 2, 2020

## **Superintendent Thomas Anderson’s statement on COVID-19**

Dear New Bedford Public Schools community,

I have shared in previous communications that New Bedford Public Schools is monitoring the unfolding international health risk related to COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, in addition to the yearly impact the flu has on thousands of people across the country [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

The precautions regarding the flu can also be applied to how we address concerns related to COVID 19.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) currently classifies the immediate health risk posed by COVID 19 as low. However, the CDC is urging all schools, businesses, health care providers, and individuals to prepare for a possible increase in COVID 19 cases in the United States. An increase in cases could potentially require many steps including cancellation of public events and school closings.

We are in close collaboration with local agencies including Southcoast Health (including St. Luke’s Hospital), the City of New Bedford Health Department and we are following guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Boston Public Health Commission. I encourage you to visit their websites in addition to the CDC’s website, for more information.

Our facilities team is spending additional time sanitizing classrooms and common spaces to help reduce the spread of germs. I would like to remind you that the most effective precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses are thorough frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and avoiding touching your face with unwashed hands. If children or family members have a fever and symptoms of a respiratory illness (such as cough or shortness of breath), please keep them home and contact your doctor. This applies to staff as well.

Please be assured that the health and well-being of our students and staff are our top priority. This time will be stressful for all and I ask that we all work to stay informed and be empathetic to individual challenges. I remain particularly grateful for the strength and togetherness of this community.

Sincerely,

Thomas Anderson

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