Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff and Students:

New London Public Schools is dedicated to taking the precautions necessary to protect the school community from the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). District administration has been receiving regular updates from the State Department of Education, CT Department of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CT Association of School Superintendents (CAPSS), LEARN, our district attorneys, and through local collaborations with leaders from Ledge Light Health District and the City of New London. In addition, last night Governor Lamont and Commissioner Cardona shared additional guidance. As the details surrounding COVID-19 change daily, the district will continue to work in conjunction with these local and state health officials to be as prepared as possible.

Special care and attention are being paid to the cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of all school and district facilities. Custodial staff will continue to clean surfaces that are frequently touched such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, keyboards, desks and handrails. Industry-standard protocols will continue to be followed; non-porous surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected, porous surfaces will be cleaned, and bathrooms will be wet cleaned and disinfected. Shared supplies such as baskets of markers and physical education equipment are also being cleaned regularly. Additional hand soap and sanitizer are available, upon request, to staff and students. The CDC recommends using products that are labeled as hospital grade disinfectants. The products that the district uses meet this criteria; further information on these products can be found in the Technical Data and Safety Data Sheets, which are available upon request. Furthermore, our bus company, First Student, has also increased their cleaning methodologies.

At this time, school closures in Connecticut have not been directed by Federal and/or State officials. Instead, the Governor and Commissioner have issued guidance https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus. The decision to close schools will be made by school district administration in coordination with and/or at the direction of local health officials. After a collaborative meeting this morning with leaders of Ledge Light Health District and various City departments, the following protocols are hereby implemented for New London Public Schools:

Effective Immediately:
- At this time, all school and district offices will remain open, in regular session, for students and staff.
- Parent-teacher conferences will continue, this week, as scheduled.
- Tomorrow evening’s Community Meal will continue to serve meals; however, these meals will be served in the take-out only fashion. The gallery-walk and information session for the school construction project will be held as scheduled in the middle school media center.
• The Human Trafficking training scheduled for Friday morning from 8-10 will continue as scheduled.
• All enrichment activities/events*, that are planned for groups of more than 100 people, are cancelled beginning tomorrow March 11th through April 30th. (*evening school concerts, plays, family engagement events, etc.)
• All in-state and out-of-state field trips are cancelled between March 11th and April 30th.
• All winter sports championship tournaments are cancelled. This announcement was made by the CIAC around lunchtime today.

If There Is A Confirmed Case of COVID-19 Within Our School District:
• Should there be a need to close our schools (due to a confirmed case of COVID-19), all school and district buildings will be closed for 10-14 days. Please begin to prepare alternative accommodations for your child in the event that a closure is warranted. The NLPS school community will learn about this need for a closing through our social media outlets, email, a live phone message (School Messenger) and letters posted on our district website. In addition, the district will keep the school community apprised of updates through regular communications (at least weekly) as this situation may change regularly.
• Should the district need to close, the days missed will be made up between June 22nd and June 30th, and we will coordinate with CSDE for additional supports to meet the mandated school year requirement.
• Should there be a 10-14-day school closing, we will continue to prepare and provide healthy meals (breakfast, lunch and snacks) for our students. Announcements regarding specific meal sites around the community and times for pick up will be communicated.

What All Can Do To Assist:
• Wash hands thoroughly and often.
• Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
• Stay home when you are sick.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
• 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 wipes.

Please Communicate Health Concerns:
• If staff or students are experiencing illness symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), please stay home and communicate these symptoms to your doctor/pediatrician and to the school nurse.
• If any staff or students get tested for COVID-19, please communicate this information to my Executive Assistant, Cristea Francolino @ francolinok@newlondon.org. (All information will be kept in strict confidence.)
• If staff or students/families are traveling out of the state or country over the next 7 weeks, please communicate this information to respective school leaders.
• If you have any questions regarding COVID-19, all may use the attached hotline number.
Enclosed with this letter are some useful resources for families and staff to use regarding educating students, modeling healthy habits, and facts about COVID-19. We are hopeful that our school community is not affected by this illness and thank you for your understanding and partnership as we work together through this challenge.

Sincerely,

Cynthia E. Ritchie
Superintendent of Schools

cc. Stephen Mansfield, Director of Health, Ledge Light Health District
Mayor Michael Passero, Mayor of the City of New London
Regina Mosely, President of the New London Board of Education