

March 10, 2020

Dear Willsboro CSD Parents/Guardians/Families,

Earlier today, out of an abundance of caution, Essex County declared a State of Emergency. According to Essex County Emergency Services, this action was taken for administrative purposes to procure government funding and supplies for the County in response to coronavirus (COVID-19). **At this time, there are no known confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) within the Willsboro Central School District community and we have not received any notification of any infections within Essex County, NY.** Please know that the declaration of a State of Emergency was a proactive action taken by the County to expedite its emergency preparedness activities and **does not currently impact any school operations or activities.**

We are continuing to monitor the situation in conjunction with local experts such as Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES) and the Essex County Public Health Department. Additionally, we strongly adhere to guidance from the NYS Education Department, NYS Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

New information on this important topic has been included below:

Activity Cancellation

At this time, all activities at Willsboro CSD remain as planned. Some events across the state have been cancelled by the organizers. We continue to monitor how we might be affected. **Be aware that some activities (interscholastic events, foreign travel, field trips, concerts, etc.) may be cancelled with little advance notice.**

Family Communication

The district's automated calling system is our primary means of communication. It is important for us to have updated contact information for all students. If you have recently changed phone numbers, please contact Brandy Pierce Nolette at (518) 963-4456 or bpierce@willsborocsd.org to have this updated in our emergency contact system.

Possible School Cancellation

Very little is known about the impact of a possible extended school closure. School districts in New York State are subject to a minimum 180-day calendar. Responsibility for waiving this requirement rests with the New York State Commissioner of Education. **At this time, there is no necessity to close school in our district.** If a closure becomes appropriate it is unclear if the 180-day requirement would be waived. Many questions and concerns have been raised and we are awaiting guidance and clarification from the New York State Department of Education. However, in an effort to be prepared, we have requested that instructional staff begin thinking about how they could offer instruction if we had to close for an extended period of time.

Current Protocol

Our primary strategy remains to prevent the spread of this virus through aggressive cleaning and hygiene best practices. We also continue to encourage the following:

- **Wash** your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- **Wash** your hands with soap and water before eating, after eating and after using the bathroom.
- **Avoid** touching your eyes, nose, and mouth especially with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid** close contact with people who are sick.
- **Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. If you use a tissue, throw it in the trash immediately after use.
- **Routinely clean** and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- **Follow** the CDC recommendations pertaining to travel abroad.

Most importantly, consider **keeping students home when they are sick.**

We will continue to provide regular updates and please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin M. Gardner', written in a cursive style.

Justin M. Gardner
Superintendent of School