



# WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Excellence, Shaping the Future*

EMILY J. PARKS  
Superintendent of Schools

## PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION REGARDING CORONAVIRUS

February 26, 2020

Dear Westwood Parents:

I am writing to provide information about the respiratory disease COVID-19 or the "coronavirus."

As of this writing, Massachusetts has one confirmed case of COVID-19 and the risk to our residents remains low. At the same time, the risk for the influenza virus is high.

The Westwood Public Schools is in communication with the Westwood Department of Public Health, the Massachusetts Executive Offices of Health and Human Services Department of Public Health, the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and our school physician. These agencies and clinicians are providing guidance to school administrators and school health personnel regarding COVID-19. We communicate daily with public health officials to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information and are implementing appropriate guidance. The most recent update includes:

- *Risk to Massachusetts residents who have not visited China remains low.*
- *Precautions to prevent colds and flu will also prevent transmission of COVID-19.*
- *Individuals are to continue with hand hygiene, cough etiquette, and staying home when sick.*
- *Schools have been instructed to continue with regular cleaning and disinfecting processes.*

All local health departments in the region, including Westwood, continue to monitor the situation and take part in weekly conference calls.

The guidance letter sent to all schools is available at this link:

<http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/userfiles/files/form-and-documents/district/Superintendent/COVID-19-novel-coronavirus-for-schools-022420.pdf>

Here is a useful fact sheet with additional information:

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/information-on-the-outbreak-of-2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19#-printable-fact-sheets>

A statement from the Westwood Board of Health is available here:

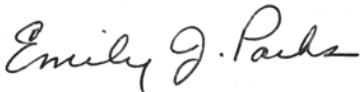
<http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/userfiles/files/form-and-documents/district/Superintendent/CoronavirusUpdate-3-26-2020.pdf>

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recognizes that prevention efforts offer the strongest protection from all illnesses including the Coronavirus. These efforts include **vaccination, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, washing objects/surfaces, and staying 6 ft. away from individuals who are sick.**

If your student has recently travelled overseas to a country that has been impacted by COVID-19, we ask that you contact your school nurse so that we can ensure that appropriate precautions are implemented.

We understand and share your concern for the health of students across all grades and all schools. The District will keep you informed of updates or changes as we are advised by our local and state departments of public health. We hope that this information allows you to make informed choices regarding you and your family's health and wellness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily J. Parks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Emily J Parks  
Superintendent