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DR. MARGUERITE CONNOLLY
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

March 2, 2020

Dear Weston Community,

Here is an update to the letter we sent last month as the COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, has now spread to many areas across the globe. We continue to work closely with the Weston Board of Health and are following recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We feel it is important to repeat what we had said in our January communication:

- Clinical symptoms and features of the COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath, and difficulty breathing. Other early symptoms to watch for are chills, body aches, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, and runny nose.
- While this is a serious public health situation, the CDC continues to believe the immediate risk to the general public here in Massachusetts remains low at this time. Yet, in today's connected world, outbreaks of diseases are always of concern. As with seasonal flu and strep infections, there are precautions we can all take to remain as healthy as possible.

As the virus continues to spread, we have increased our preparedness by undertaking the following steps:

- This week our nurses will train elementary classroom teachers and secondary science teachers on some important universal safeguards that they in turn will teach the students. These safeguards include thoroughly washing hands, following hygiene measures with coughing and sneezing, reducing hand shaking and touching faces with hands, and staying home from school when feeling sick.
- We are purchasing equipment and supplies that we feel will help keep staff and students safer from all airborne and contagious illnesses. This includes the addition of two backpack fogging machines to the three handheld fogging machines we already have in the district. These machines are able to disinfect doorknobs, elevator buttons, and all other surfaces in classrooms, offices, hallways, bathrooms, and other public spaces. Additionally, we have ordered new hand-sanitizer for all spaces in the schools. As we review and encourage proper handwashing techniques with students, we expect increased use of hand-sanitizer when soap and water is not available.
- Our District Safety Team will be meeting this week to continue planning for the possibility of increased staff and student absenteeism due to the COVID-19 or any other illness. Furthermore, the Team will discuss plans for continued learning for students if it becomes necessary to close schools.
- Our nursing staff continues to work diligently to track and share information about illnesses across the district. If your child is sick, it is important for you to communicate to the school nurse the nature of the illness, particularly when your child exhibits flu-like symptoms.

This communication is intended to inform and not to alarm. We know that in these times of increased stress, we must remain measured and mindful, and at the same time be as prepared as possible. We will continue to communicate with you in the coming weeks as new information becomes available. Thank you for your collaboration in these matters.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marguerite (Midge) Connolly
Superintendent

Ms. Laurie Melchionda
Director of Health Services