

# EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY

<http://www.escnj.us>

1660 Stelton Road, Piscataway, NJ 08854  
Telephone: (732) 777-9848 ♦ Fax: (732) 777-9855

**Mark J. Finkelstein**  
*Superintendent*

**Gary E. Molenaar**  
*Assistant Superintendent*



**Patrick M. Moran**  
*Business Administrator/  
Board Secretary*

**To:** Parents/Guardians

**From:** Mark J. Finkelstein  
Superintendent

**Date:** March 6, 2020

**Re:** Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

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As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in the ESCNJ schools and programs. We want to keep our schools open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season, however, we need your help to do this.

We are working closely with the Middlesex County Department of Health Services and the Middlesex County Office of Education and, in addition, are continually monitoring state and federal health agencies to receive current bulletins, updates, and reports on seasonal flu and Covid-19/Coronavirus conditions. These measures are being undertaken to ensure that the best possible decisions are made and appropriate courses of action are taken concerning the health and safety of our students.

At this time, we are doing everything we can to keep our schools functioning as usual. This includes paying special attention to the daily maintenance and cleaning operations at all of our schools, with a special emphasis on shared areas such as doorknobs, desks, railings, and faucets.

Here are a few things that you can do to help.

- Teach/help your children to wash their hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach/help your children not to share personal items like drinks, food, or unwashed utensils.
- Teach/help your children to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues and to dispose of them properly. If a tissue is not available they should cover up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm, or sleeve instead of the hand.
- Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have

diarrhea. If your child is at risk for complications from the flu, call your health care provider at the first signs of influenza-like illness.

- Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- Do not send children to school if they are sick. Any children who are found to be sick while at school will be sent home.

If the flu becomes more severe, we may take additional steps to prevent the spread such as:

- conducting active fever and flu symptom screening of students and staff as they arrive at school,
- making changes to increase the space between people such as moving desks farther apart and postponing class trips, and
- dismissing students from school for at least 7 days if they become sick.

Stay informed. Listen to reliable and trustworthy sources of information on radio and TV, or visit the following websites:

What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID19):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>

What to do if you are sick:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/what-you-should-do.pdf>

Stop the spread of germs – help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses like COVID-19:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>

You may also wish to call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu. We will provide updates as necessary and will notify you of any additional changes to our ESCNJ strategy to prevent the spread of flu.