March 27, 2020

Dear Tenafly School Community,

As we embark upon the final weekend in March, I hope this finds you and yours safe, healthy and well.

In recent days, our district has received reports of presumptive and confirmed COVID-19 cases within our community. Unfortunately, the expectation of those in the medical field is that these reports will continue to be received at increased numbers in the days and weeks ahead. Please join us in sending positive thoughts to those affected directly by this virus, along with wishes for full and speedy recoveries.

The most recent directives from the NJ Dept. of Education and the NJ Dept. of Health are being followed by the Tenafly Public Schools: When we receive a report about a confirmed or presumptive case of COVID-19, we notify the local health department who is then in contact with the individual. Based on the information received from the individual, the health department determines who, if anyone, needs to be contacted.

Earlier in the month, some districts helped with the communication of reported cases in their school communities as a means of informing their communities. Sadly now, with rising numbers, this is no longer the procedure.

The school district is no longer part of this communication process, as any investigation into a diagnosed individual remains private between that individual and the authorized health official. We appreciate your cooperation in honoring the privacy rights of individuals with this illness, as with any other.

If you believe you have symptoms of COVID-19, PLEASE contact your physician by phone to be provided with next steps. You may also utilize the services of the NJ Department of Health:

- Call 2-1-1
- Call: 1-800-962-1253
- Text COVID to 898-211
- Visit https://covid19nj.gov/ for more information
Our district community will continue to persevere and make positive progress as we continue operating under Governor Murphy’s Executive Order on Monday. This order remains open-ended, a point that was further verified in Governor Murphy's March 26th address when he stated that the closure of schools would not be revisited "until April 17th, at the very earliest."

On Monday, March 30th our Virtual Learning Day schedules take effect. It is our hope that these schedules assist those students better served by structure during remote learning. Likewise, we remain available to provide alternatives to any student who finds structure to be a true struggle right now. Please visit the TPS Remote Learning Center site of our district website at https://www.tenaflyschools.org/Domain/2970

Social Distancing remains in effect state-wide, and it is likely to remain in effect for quite some time, including during our Spring Break (April 6-10). Please consider how you might be able to enjoy this break from school work while continuing to practice social distancing. This contractual time off will present our staff with an opportunity to take a healthy pause from their efforts and work with students, but we recognize the challenges it can present to parents who are likely multi-tasking with their own work responsibilities. To assist you, we are asking our teachers to post some fun activities and ideas on their website that students can do at home during this week off from school.

Here is one thing your family can accomplish together: Register for the 2020 Census and be counted! You can complete this online by visiting https://my2020census.gov/

You might also enjoy a family meal without the mess! Consider supporting local restaurants in Tenafly by ordering delivery, take-out or curbside delivery. So many of these businesses support our schools, and there is no time better than now to show appreciation to them. A delicious meal, followed by a good old-fashioned board game, perhaps? Makes for another memory to share once we make it through this temporary period of time.

Finally, to all those of you who are serving on the front lines of this pandemic crisis, caring for the COVID-19 patients and protecting our community, we say THANK YOU!!! To contribute to the efforts of these, and all those essential personnel doing work daily to keep us safe, our district has arranged a collection of all available masks, gloves and gowns we currently have in our schools. These will be picked up by the county next week and brought to those nearby locations which can use them the most. Sincere thanks to all those involved in this collection process.
If you have any of the following items, please consider donating them to a local hospital:

- Hospitals/Local First Responders
- N95 masks
- Surgical masks
- Face shields/goggles
- Isolation gowns
- Gloves
- Oral thermometers

This is such a challenging time for everyone. Parents and students, know that we applaud EVERYTHING you are doing to flatten the curve, to keep up with your studies, and to stay motivated while being separated from your everyday lives. I close with a Chinese Proverb I shared with the staff a few weeks ago: "The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials." YOU are the gems being polished and perfected daily.

Stay healthy, stay well, and stay strong.

Very Truly Yours,

Shauna C. DeMarco
Superintendent
Tenafly Public Schools