

**ALPHA PUBLIC SCHOOL**  
**817 North Boulevard**  
**Alpha, New Jersey 08865**  
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**Mr. Seth Cohen, Chief School Administrator**

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s);

As the COVID-19 preparedness dominates the news and social media, I was not sure a letter from the Chief School Administrator which contained the same information that was already available would reassure the community or increase our collective anxiety on the issue. On Friday the State released information for schools to prepare for the worst; now is the time to share information.

**Preparedness:**

The School already has a protocol for cleaning the building in the flu season which is no different than the cleaning protocols for COVID-19. Bacteria and infections, regardless of the how new, are prevented in the same way: We clean with the appropriate disinfectant throughout the building.

Washing hands continues to be the best defense. We make sure to have soap and disinfectant in classrooms and bathrooms. This week, teachers are taking a few minutes to remind the students on proper hand washing technique. The only visible difference in our preparation is that any student in the nurse's office who is showing signs of flu-like symptoms will be wearing a mask while waiting for parent pick up.

**School Closure and the 180 day requirement:**

Historically, New Jersey has never allowed schools to be relieved of their 180 days of school requirement. Even when the last hurricane closed some districts for 2-4 weeks, those schools were required to add days to the calendar. On Friday, the state released guidelines for schools to have classes from home that will count toward the school year **IF, AND ONLY IF, THE CDC OR STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CLOSES THE DISTRICT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY.**

While conventional wisdom suggests that Internet learning will be the easiest, we must guarantee that **ALL** students can have access to learning. Connectivity throughout the district and the proper computers and printers in every home is not certain. Therefore, we are going to be sending home packets containing learning activities for 14 days. Obviously, this is no substitute for the classroom, but it will allow us to continue learning to the best of our ability. Packets will be sent home within the next two weeks. They will be labeled in an envelope and also available as a download on our website.

If we need to utilize this method to deliver instruction, teachers will be responding to emailed questions during normal school hours. Families without email access can make notes on their child's work with specific question, and the work can be completed upon the student's return to school.

**Special Education and Related Services:**

Students who receive Special Education Services will have their work modified as it would in a class setting. Parents who feel their child's modifications are not appropriate can email the Special Education teacher, and the work can be adjusted. Families without email access can make notes on their child's work with specific questions, and the work can be completed upon the student's return to school upon reopening. Students who receive related services will also have activities to complete in his or her packet.

**Free and Reduced Lunch:**

Families receiving free and reduced lunch will be able to pick up a bagged breakfast and lunch each day that school is closed. Pick-up is between 8:30-9:00 am at the Cafeteria side door, next to entrance #9 behind the school building. Entrances are numbered above the doorway.

Obviously, we hope that we are not going to need to utilize this process. I believe that the greatest danger to our community is panic. Currently, the COVID-19 virus is being reported as mild in children, with common cleanliness techniques proving successful in stopping the spread of the virus. If you have any questions, please contact me at the school. The State has established a COVID-19 hotline that is reportedly staffed 24 hours a day. Please call 1-800-222-1222 if you have specific health questions.

All the best;

Seth Cohen  
CSA  
Alpha