

# Farmington High School

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March 9, 2020

Dear FHS Families,

We hope this email finds you doing well as we progress through the winter months. In an effort to continue to foster open communication regarding upcoming travel, we felt it was pertinent to reach out with an update regarding health notices from a variety of local, state, national, and international organizations. As a district, we are closely monitoring the coronavirus outbreak overseas as well as in the U.S., and conferring frequently as a district leadership team to discuss whether developments necessitate a change in plans related to upcoming school based travel.

As you have learned through previous messages from the district, coronaviruses are a common family of viruses and one of the most frequent causes of the common cold but also are rarely associated with more severe illnesses such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Like with all respiratory viruses, prevention is key. We continue to encourage common sense precautions such as frequently washing hands, using hand sanitizer, and using a tissue or elbow when coughing and sneezing.

Recently, Farmington Public Schools launched a [page](#) on our website with up to date information regarding COVID-19. In addition, the State of Connecticut launched a website for coronavirus updates across the region. This website launch followed a press release in early February 2020 by the [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#) (DPH) in an effort to issue guidance for schools and local health districts regarding the coronavirus. Our leadership team is consistently monitoring these resources to help with our decision making in Farmington. Furthermore, we are regularly reviewing information provided by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) for guidance, and will remain in touch with state and local health departments as needed.

In regards to upcoming travel, the increased focus on the spread of the coronavirus has led to greater attention to health hazards across the nation and internationally. A growing question in school districts is whether or not to continue field trips outside of Connecticut, especially international trips and out-of-state trips, which present more complex issues simply due to the distance between the destination of these trips and students' families and the school district. We understand that each school district must make an individual decision about trips scheduled for the foreseeable future. Some school districts and universities have already canceled international and out-of-state trips, while other educational organizations are continuing to monitor the situation and have not yet made a final decision.

Based on the most recent guidance at this time, we are suspending all travel outside of the state of Connecticut and the United States. We will closely monitor the continuance of travel within the state as well. Educators leading each of our out of state trips will be in contact regarding next steps as we work with insurance providers and conference hosts to maximize reimbursement. Please know that we will inform families as soon as a decision is made regarding local trips.

The safety of our students and faculty has been and will continue to be our first priority. We thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to evaluate the evolving situation.

Sincerely,

*Kathleen C. Greider*

Superintendent of Schools

*Scott Hurwitz*

Principal

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