

Rockville Centre Union Free School District

Administration Building
128 Shepherd Street
Rockville Centre, New York 11570-2298
(516) 255-8957 ☎ FAX (516) 255-8810
www.rvcschools.org



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Dear Parents/Persons in Parental Relations and Staff:

As I'm sure you are aware, every day brings new information concerning the spread of the Coronavirus and the means by which both those in the health, governmental and school communities need to respond. As we mentioned in the automated call last week the school district will continue to provide you with information directly related to your children as students in our system. In addition, we will continue to keep you up to date on school district plans for responding to the need for closing our schools. At this time, there are no confirmed cases at any of the Rockville Centre School locations. We will continue to post updates on the school district website.

Today we are sharing with you some of the updated guidance that we have received from the Department of Health and the State Education Department as it relates to our children in the schools and also sharing the outline of plans for remote learning should schools have to close for an extended period of time. The information is arranged by a series of topics below:

Cleaning and Sanitizing the Buildings

1. Our custodial staff cleans and sanitizes high touch areas as recommended by the State which include but are not limited to door knobs, light switches, counter tops, and desk tops.
2. There is now **new guidance** which will allow the use of sanitizers to clean computers/keyboards. Until now we have only been able to use products that clean but do not sanitize keyboards. We are in the process of securing products that will allow us to clean and sanitize keyboards on a regular basis. Parents will now be permitted to send into the school wipes and hand sanitizers that are alcohol based.

Field Trips

1. Trips to foreign countries for the balance of the school year have been cancelled.
2. Trips out of State particularly if they involve an overnight stay will be reviewed on a case by case basis and depending on the State, the mode of transportation or the location within the State to which they are going may be cancelled.
3. Overnight trips within New York State will also be reviewed on a case by case basis. Depending on the sanitizing practices of the venue to which students would be going, trips may or may not be permitted. The District will also look at the numbers of families and or individuals quarantined in the vicinity of the destination and use that as a factor in deciding.

Day field trips within New York State will be reviewed on a case by case basis and the same criteria for permission will be used that was used for determining overnight trips in New York State.

School Closures

1. There are new New York State guidelines concerning the conditions under which schools will close. The school district will work closely with the Department of Health to determine when and if a school needs to be closed. However, the new guidelines indicate that if any employee or student test positive for COVID-19 the school district will be closed for a minimum of 24 hours to enable an investigation by the District and the Health Department. During this first 24-hour period no instruction will occur. During this period of time, the District will be required to disinfect all buildings where the student or staff had contact prior to testing positive for COVID-19. As a result of this investigation, a determination will be made as to the length of the closure. If the school district is forced to close for an extended period of time, we will transition to our remote learning plan which is described below.
2. All scheduled after school and evening activities sponsored by the school district or organizations within the school district will go on as planned. If schools are closed, all activities within the buildings will be cancelled during the period of time that the buildings are closed.

Mental Health Needs

1. It is important that you are provided with information to assist in dispelling rumors and misunderstandings and to help address your children's concerns during this time. The District website links to up to date and valid information on the COVID-19 outbreak. Below are resources that address mental health needs of students and communities during an infectious disease outbreak. In addition, please know that while school is in session our Pupil Personnel Staff is standing by to assist you if the need should arise.

Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks,
<https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4885.pdf>

Following are resources that may be helpful in talking to students about the COVID-19: • Just for Kids: A Comic Exploring the New Coronavirus

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploringthe-new-coronavirus>

How Do You Talk to Children About Coronavirus? Stay Honest and Simple to Avoid Anxiety.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/02/28/talking-children-coronavirus-keepsimple-avoid-stress/4906147002/>

How to Talk to Your Kids About the Coronavirus (and Ease Their Fears)

<https://www.nbcnews.com/better/lifestyle/how-talk-your-kids-about-coronavirus-ease-theirfears-ncna1129851>

Remote Learning

1. The school district continues to put together plans that may have to be implemented if schools are closed for an extended period of time.
2. If schools close, the school district will rely on remote or e-learning during the time that children are at home for grades 4-12. In kindergarten through grade 2 children will be provided paper packets for work at home. In grade 3, there will be a combination of paper packets and remote learning.
3. The school district will provide every student in grades 3-12 with an iPad. Schools will utilize google classroom for two-way communication between students and teachers.
4. Not every student in the school district has access to Wi-Fi. Consequently, the District is looking at alternative ways to connect students remotely to Wi-Fi. Should there be any problem with any device issued by the school district, access to Wi-Fi and instruction can be done by using a smart phone or some other device within the home.
5. In the next few days, specific instructions in regard to remote learning will be sent home from the District or building principal.

Educational Impact

Questions have been asked regarding the impact of any potential disruption of the educational process on student grades, final examinations, Regents examinations, IB Assessments, and how they might affect, for example, college applications.

Please be assured that the teachers and administrators are cognizant of this concern and will take into account any disruption of the educational routine, whether that be missed instruction or the need for additional time to complete assignments. Teachers of students with disabilities are determining what, if any, additional supports and accommodations may be necessary.

No student will be harmed by a disruption of our educational process. We will work with students and their families to effectively provide instruction to the extent we are able and smoothly transition our students back to school should we have to close.

At this time, there is no guidance concerning issues related to credit for graduation, attendance, State 3-8 exams or Regents exams. To the best of our knowledge at this time, grades 3-8 exams in math and language arts and all Regents exams will be administered as scheduled.

Let me repeat again that I will continue to share information as it becomes available to us via email and postings on our school district website. You will receive from the school district and the buildings specific information related to remote learning in the next few days.