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March 4, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Orange-Ulster BOCES is closely monitoring information on COVID-19, caused by the novel coronavirus. We are following guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Orange County Department of Health and the New York State Education Department. The three main symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath.

There are a number of steps that students, staff and community members can take to minimize the spread of all respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, according to the state Department of Health:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a 60% or greater alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Heavily soiled hands should be washed.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Contact your healthcare provider if you or a family member begin showing symptoms of a respiratory illness. For more information, consider consulting these additional resources:

- Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>
- Travel: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/faqs.html>
- COVID-19: What is Stigma and What Causes It?
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fstigma-faq.html
- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) - Frequently Asked Questions - Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#prevention>
- Prevention, Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

In addition, New York has established a Novel Coronavirus Hotline, which can provide additional information. Call 1-888-364-3065 with questions or concerns about travel and symptoms. Orange-Ulster BOCES will continue to share information as it becomes available.

Please know that, as always, the health and safety of our students and staff is our highest priority, and we will remain vigilant in our efforts.

Sincerely,

William J. Hecht
District Superintendent/CEO

WJH/sgd