



Weston Public Schools
Office of the Superintendent
William S. McKersie, Ph.D.

MEMORANDUM

To: WPS Families & Staff
Date: March 6, 2020
Subject: COVID-19 Update 3.6.2020 – **School/Classroom Cleaning Procedures**

Background

We are providing periodic updates to WPS families and staff about the district's efforts to keep students and staff safe and healthy through the COVID-19 outbreak. Intensive work has been underway on both phases of the action planning.

Updates on the following topics will should be expected by families and staff (with notation for status):

- Overview Statement on Action Planning Phases (Prevention; District Closure) – 2.27.20
- School/District Closure Procedures – 3.6.20
- Early Dismissal on March 10, 2020 for Planning – 3.6.20
- School and Classroom Cleaning – 3.6.20
- Travel Restrictions for WPS-Sponsored Programs -- Pending
- Academic Programs During Possible Closure – Pending
- School Calendar Implications of Possible Closure -- Pending

Our updates are sent in a “Be Prepared” mode. They should not be allowed to induce concerns, fears, or rumors. Our intent is to help keep WPS families and staff calm during what has become an understandably trying and anxious time. We will inform all families and staff if we have one or more medically-confirmed cases of COVID-19, and immediately announce the status of the district.

School/Classroom Cleaning Procedures

We have received permission to allow the use of a broader set of EPA-approved cleaning products in the schools and classrooms. Medical and state authorities provided this permission within the last 24 hours.

- Immediately, our custodians and Affineco staff will begin using the products known to control the Novel-Coronavirus.

- Immediately, our custodians will conduct extra wipe-downs with the noted products every day. This will be in addition to cleaning by Affineco. While this will require overtime work, it is an essential step for protecting the health and safety of students and staff.
- Immediately, we are giving other WPS employees the option to use such cleaning products in their classrooms or work spaces to wipe down commonly used surfaces.
- As of this week, First Student had begun using their protocol for disinfecting buses to address the potential for Novel-Coronavirus.
- For your reference, here is a link to a list of such products.
<https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>

The step to broaden the use of cleaning products requires the WPS to “administratively waive” our Green Cleaning Program until the end of the school year (Policy 3526 -- <http://www.westonps.org/uploaded/Policies/3000a/3526.pdf>). I am taking this step after consultation with the BOE Chair, Tony Pesco, and the WPS Policy Committee, chaired by Melissa Walker.

I want to underscore our medical consultations on this decision. Medical authorities, including the CT Epidemiologist, confirmed that "green products" are not killing the Novel-Coronavirus. Moreover, the health risks of using a broader set of EPA-approved products is low, especially juxtaposed to the risk of not cleaning appropriately and not preventing COVID-19.

For your reference, here is a key excerpt from one of the permissions received late yesterday from CT authorities:

Please know that it is acceptable to use most conventional cleaning and sanitizing products. The majority of disinfecting soaps and cleaning products are exempt from state-mandated “green” cleaning protocols. State laws that require the use of “green” cleaning products also provide an exception for the use of any disinfectant, disinfecting cleaner, sanitizer or any other antimicrobial product approved by federal law. Use of items such as alcohol-based hand sanitizers, chlorine bleach disinfectants and hand soaps and disinfectant wipes are permitted by the states green cleaning laws. Also, as per CDC guidance, hand soap and warm water are effective disinfectants when used correctly – primarily washing vigorously for at least 20 seconds. In short, if a cleaning product is normally available at local retail establishments, then it is most likely acceptable to use. (Josh Geballe, CT Commissioner of Administrative Services, March 5, 2020.)