



# PORT WASHINGTON Union Free School District

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March 24, 2020

Dear Port Washington Families,

We are now into our second week of school closure. The coronavirus crisis has certainly challenged us all to adapt to a “new normal” in the days and weeks ahead. I would like to recognize and thank all of our teachers, administrators, IT technicians, clerical, custodial, and support staff for the herculean efforts demonstrated in helping our district, students and families transition to these new circumstances. On behalf of our Board of Education and all of our district personnel, I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our deep appreciation to all the first responders in our community for their service and commitment to the safety and health of all of us who live and work in the Port Washington community.

### **Closing of District Outdoor Facilities**

As many of you may have heard, in an effort to control the spread and transmission of the coronavirus, updated restrictions have been placed on state, county, town and local parks and recreation facilities. Consistent with these new restrictions, the Port Washington School District has closed the use of its outdoor facilities until further notice. This includes all district playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, athletic fields and tracks, and restroom facilities. For information concerning restrictions for local village parks, please visit the individual village website. To learn about the specific restrictions in county and town parks, please visit these websites:

*Nassau County*

[www.nassaucountyny.gov/1767/Parks-Recreation-Museums](http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/1767/Parks-Recreation-Museums)

*Town of North Hempstead*

[www.northhempsteadny.gov/](http://www.northhempsteadny.gov/)

### **Significance of Social Distancing: *We're in this together***

From federal health officials, down to the communications from local health authorities, we should all understand that social distancing is the single most critical factor in flattening the curve, mitigating the spread of this virus, and helping to limit the demands on our health care system, hospitals and other health care facilities. As these health officials have been saying most stridently in the last few days, this should not be considered a suggestion or a recommendation, but an absolute mandate. Social distancing not only protects your own health, but all others in our community, especially those in the most vulnerable categories, such as senior citizens and those with compromised immune systems.

Even while district schools are closed, we remain in constant contact with state and county health departments and the NYS Education Department and continue to follow guidelines issued by these government agencies as they relate to the coronavirus and protocols to be followed by school districts. Until directed otherwise by NCDOH, NYSDOH and NYSDOE, Port Washington UFSD will remain closed until further notice.

We realize coronavirus information is flooding the news media on a daily basis. We understand it can be overwhelming at times. We will be mindful of this and try to limit our district updates to new information that is primarily focused on district operations and your children's education and health.

To remain updated on health information related to coronavirus, we encourage you to visit these federal, state and local websites:

*Centers for Disease and Prevention Control*  
[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

*New York State DOH*  
[www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov](http://www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov)

*Nassau County DOH*  
[www.nassaucountyny.gov/1652/Health-Department](http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/1652/Health-Department)

For an update on New York State initiatives relative to the current health crisis, you can visit the governor's update page at: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news>

We will continue to take whatever measures we can to help protect the Port Washington community. Stay safe and stay well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Hynes", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael J. Hynes, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

MJH/da