

Dear Valley Staff,

I just want to provide you with a brief update on the impact of COVID-19. This remains a fluid situation which is causing great uncertainty. I am in constant communication with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EHS), the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), and the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC), in order to monitor this situation. Also, I continue to meet with Valley's principals, supervisors, and our medical staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and the common flu. I thank Lead Nurse Jessica Scalzi and all of Valley's staff for their vigilance regarding personal hygiene and sanitizing high-touch surfaces.

At this time this is what we know and don't know:

- Rest assured, Valley Collaborative has an Emergency Management Plan to respond to public health emergencies. Valley's Emergency Management Plan has been recently reviewed and updated. This detailed plan contains various protocols ranging from self-quarantine to school/program closures.
- COVID-19 presents itself with flu-like symptoms which are highly contagious. If you or someone you have been in contact with develops flu-like symptoms, please contact Lead Nurse Scalzi for guidance (978) 528-7896.
- If you have been directed by a medical professional to self-quarantine or if someone you have been in contact with has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, it is your responsibility to notify Lead Nurse Scalzi.
- At my request, Lead Nurse Scalzi has sent home numerous communications to families/guardians regarding precautions to take for both the flu and COVID-19. She will continue to keep our Valley community informed regarding this fluid situation. A follow up joint letter from Lead Nurse Scalzi and myself is being sent home today.
- The state has cancelled all international and inter-state travel.
- In addition, Valley has also cancelled all unessential gatherings of 25 people or more; for example, the school play, overnight trips, sporting events, etc.
- The only staff that are permitted into ISN classrooms are individuals servicing the students' IEP grids. All individuals must sanitize their hands before entering these vulnerable classrooms.
- All students and adults attending Valley programs and Valley staff have been participating in a mandatory hand-washing program in the morning and afternoon.
- Our maintenance and facilities staff have made a concerted effort to continuously sanitize our facilities and ensure we have the appropriate supplies for you to maintain sterile learning environments. In addition, our fleet of vans are being sanitized.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has advised to use social distancing as a method to prevent further spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is yet to be determined if extended school/program closures in Massachusetts will occur as a preventative measure. There are ongoing conference calls with various state officials and I will keep you updated when I have additional information.

I appreciate the efforts of the entire Valley community and we will continue doing everything possible to keep Valley healthy.

Again, it is very important that if you or someone you have been in contact with present with flu-like symptoms that you immediately report your symptoms to Lead Nurse Scalzi. She and I will work with the Department of Health to determine an appropriate course of action on a case by case basis.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me and/or Lead Nurse Jessica Scalzi (978) 528-7896 at any time.

Together we will get through this historic pandemic.

My best to you always,

-Chris

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