



March 13, 2020

*Dear Portland Public Schools families and community members,*

*The situation regarding the new coronavirus, COVID-19, is rapidly evolving. We continue to monitor the situation and to consult with other local districts and state officials. As a result of recent developments, the Portland Public Schools is adding to our list of precautions to help prevent the spread of the virus in our community.*

*We want to keep our schools open as long as possible because we know our community depends on us to educate their children while parents work. We continue to focus on continuing learning while protecting the school environment so our students and staff stay healthy and safe.*

*Since the virus spreads through close person-to-person contact, we're continuing to take such precautions as enhanced cleaning; instituting protocols for any students or staff who are ill; limiting public access to student gatherings; and postponing or canceling interdistrict activities and field trips.*

*Here are some new precautions we've added today:*

- *All parent-teacher conferences are now canceled in order to minimize staff's potential exposure to the virus. Our schools will reach out to schedule a phone conference in the coming weeks.*
- *We are postponing registration for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year until it's safe to resume. At present, we will continue registering students who need to enroll for the current school year. However, if you are ill or your child is ill, postpone registration until you are well.*
- *Schools are being asked not to hold school assemblies or other large gatherings of students.*
- *Beginning Monday, we plan to serve all of our foods prepackaged, including our salad bars.*
- *The Maine Principals Association has postponed the high school spring sports season until April 27th.*



- *All personal enrichment classes at Portland Adult Education are canceled in order to limit non-essential public exposure in our schools. All other classes will continue as scheduled at the present time.*
- *If necessary, the superintendent will shut down schools after consultation with the Maine CDC and other state agencies. Depending on circumstances, the decision may come quickly and notification will go out in the same way it does for severe weather notifications. The superintendent will notify students, parents, guardians, and school that we are starting remote learning and all co-curricular and extracurricular activities will be canceled until further notice.*

*All these precautions are designed to limit our students' and staff's potential exposure to the virus, but we need the cooperation of our families and the community to make them work. Please know that any parent who is not comfortable sending their child to school during this time should contact their school and it will be an excused absence.*

*I'll continue to update you on developments regarding the virus. Please continue to follow common-sense precautions: stay home when sick, cover up coughs and sneezes and wash hands regularly. If we all work together, we'll successfully achieve our main goal of continuing student learning while making sure our students and staff stay healthy and safe.*

*More information on the virus can be found at the [COVID-19 PPS Information Center](#) on our website.*

**Xavier Botana**  
**Superintendent**

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