CADES Building Hope, Transforming Lives.

March 9, 2020

Dear GCMS Families & Advocates:

As many of you know, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has communicated a warning that the COVID-19 (the new coronavirus) is likely to spread more widely in the United States. As of Friday afternoon, March 6, we are aware of one confirmed case in both Bucks and Delaware Counties. This situation requires us to plan carefully to ensure all of the GCMS students are educated in a safe and healthy environment. Our goals during this outbreak include the following:

- Keep our CADES community healthy through prevention & planning
- Remain up to date and align all actions with leading federal and local authorities
- Provide clear, consistent & concise information
- Coordinate all actions through the CADES COVID-19 Action Team lead by Sharon Jones, CADES Chief Clinical Officer

Prevention

The health and safety of our community is our top priority. The CDC has recommended a variety of prevention steps that we are implementing to help reduce the potential for the virus to enter our buildings. We need your help in battling the potential spread of COVID-19. Below are some examples of how you can help protect students and staff, as well as prevent the spread throughout the community.

1. Visitor Policy:

   At this time, we request that you do not visit CADES if you have any symptoms of respiratory illness. Those symptoms include: cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, and/or shortness of breath. We are posting signs on our entryway doors to notify visitors of the symptoms of COVID-19 and request that you not enter the building if you are experiencing these symptoms.

2. Discontinuation of Community-based Instruction, Field trips & Assemblies:

   As part of social distancing protocols, GCMS will not hold any assemblies during this prevention period. Field trips and Community-based instruction will also be postponed until May 15, the current date provided by the CDC for which social distancing measures may end. IEP transition goals will be met on-site at GCMS.

3. Hand-washing Prevention:

   CADES is following strict handwashing procedures. When you visit, we ask that you wash your hands following the protocols posted above every sink – including at least 20 seconds under warm water. Wand-washing should occur when you arrive to visit, after any and all physical contact with another person, before and after you come into contact with durable medical equipment, including wheelchairs, and before you leave the building.

4. Use of hand sanitizer Prevention:

   According to the CDC the first and best line of successful prevention is to wash hands according to outlined procedure. Due to the potential of bodily harm that results from the diagnoses of PICA, CADES has historically limited the use of hand sanitizer in our buildings. However, preventing the spread of COIVD-19 as a public health emergency is as important to preserving the health and welfare of our community. As such, hand sanitizer will be available as a secondary defense to washing hands in the majority of classrooms and common areas.

5. Cover Your Cough Prevention:

   Cough into the crook of your arm. If you use a tissue to cough or sneeze into, immediately throw out the tissue and wash your hands.

6. Avoid Touching Your Face Prevention:

   Avoid hand to face contact, including your mouth, nose and eyes. If you make contact, wash your hands.

On-going Development

We will continue to monitor developments and guidance from the CDC and our local department of health closely. This guidance will inform all of our decisions, and we encourage families to rely on health organizations like these as their primary sources of information and advice.

Throughout the upcoming weeks we expect to develop and share updates based on the guidance of the CDC and local agencies. As we make decisions moving forward, we will communicate them immediately to families, advocates and staff utilizing a variety of communication methods.

- We are setting up a COVID-19 tab on our website this week where you will also be able to go for updated in formation.

- We will also utilize our emergency broadcast text/call/email system during any time-sensitive emergency situations, should that be necessary and appropriate.

Thank you for your support and patience as we work through decisions. If you have any health-related questions, please contact GCMS Health Services Office at 610-328-5955.

For additional information, please visit the CDC website on the coronavirus:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

Sincerely,

Sharon Jones, RN, EdD, MSN, CEN, CDE
CADES Chief Clinical Officer