

Dear Parents and Community Members,

As you know the main topic of conversation throughout the state, country and the world is the Coronavirus pandemic. I wish I could assure you that we will not be affected by this virus, but I obviously cannot. What I can do is reassure you that this topic is discussed each and every day at school. We have been reinforcing the methods endorsed by Freeborn County Health, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) which are:

1. Wash your hands often
2. Cover your mouth when coughing and sneezing
3. Stay at home if you are sick

Those are the things we are asking our students and staff to do to help stop the spread of any germs. But that does not address the issue that we may have to face IF we are forced to close school or IF we choose to close school. The nice thing about our system in Glenville-Emmons is we have the e-learning option to fall back on. Please understand I use the word IF a lot in this letter because there are so many unknowns when it comes to this outbreak. But IF we were to close for a couple of days we would treat the closer like a snow day and proceed how we normally do on such days. IF, on the other hand, we end up closing for a longer time, we would certainly put our e-learning policy into play. This option at least allows us to continue to provide a certain level of educational services to our students.

There is so much information out there regarding this virus which makes it incredibly difficult to decipher what is true, what is panic and what is an outright falsehood. I get no fewer than 10 emails a day from a variety of sources with information about the Coronavirus. The only ones I read come from the sources I trust which are our public health nurses, MDE, MDH and the CDC. Certainly there is plenty of bad news that comes out. But if you truly read ALL the information you will notice a few things:

1. Most people who are infected have low to moderate symptoms
2. The majority of people infected recover in a couple of weeks
3. And you don't hear about children getting the virus

In addition to taking the common sense precautions listed above, one of the most important things to do is stay properly informed. There is a lot of information out there and although much of it is legitimate, there are many people out there intentionally trying to cause more panic. To help with this I will be putting the most current information that I receive from the above mentioned sources on our website. Please take time to read what they are saying.

Hopefully we are not faced with an outbreak within our district. But IF we are, be assured that we are keeping informed and trying to be as proactive as possible. By taking these steps our hopes and intentions are to minimize the effect this may have on your children...our students.

***Brian Shanks***

Brian Shanks  
Superintendent  
Glenville-Emmons Public School