



Dr. Meg Mayo-Brown, Superintendent of Schools

March 15, 2020

Dear BPS Community,

Thank you for your continued attention to our information updates. Part of the role BPS can play, during our community's COVID-19 response, is to provide information to employees, families and students. Today's update includes three important informational items:

1. Available breakfast and lunch **for any child 18 years or younger**,
2. Recommendations for strategies for social-distancing, and,
3. Ways to self-quarantine.

Please take time to read the following information. We thank all of our BPS members for their important role in keeping our community as safe and healthy as possible.

Sincerely,

Meg Mayo-Brown, Superintendent of Schools

### **Meals for any child 18 years or younger**

Starting tomorrow, Monday, March 16, Barnstable Public Schools will provide breakfast and lunch for any child under the age of 18 free of charge. (No ID is required). All children are welcome regardless of town of residence or school attended. All meals will be offered in compliance with USDA standards and will be a "Grab and Go" option. We will be providing both breakfast and lunch at the same time. Students are encouraged to take one breakfast and one lunch. Meals may be picked up Monday - Friday, 10am-1pm, at the main entrance area in the following locations:

Barnstable Intermediate School, 895 Falmouth Road, Hyannis

Barnstable United Elementary School, 730 Osterville-W. Barnstable Rd, Marston Mills

Hyannis West Elementary School, 549 West Main Street, Hyannis

Hyannis Youth and Community Center, 141 Bassett Ln, Hyannis,

**We must stress the importance of social distancing during meal pick up.** Please do not congregate at meal sites, and please remain 6 feet from those around you at meal pick up. Our BPS educators and staff are also leading efforts to collect non-perishable food items, and we

will begin distributing those items at meal sites as well. Please know that we are working to expand options beyond these initial four meal sites.

## What are Social-Distancing Strategies?

(The following recommendations are excerpts from <https://www.ariadnelabs.org/resources/articles/news/social-distancing-this-is-not-a-snow-day/>) [Social distancing is a critical strategy in order to reduce community spread of COVID-19](#)

### **No kid playdates, parties, sleepovers, or families/friends visiting each other's houses and apartments.**

This sounds extreme because it is. It may be particularly uncomfortable for families with small children, children with differential abilities or challenges, and for children who simply love to play with their friends. But even if you choose only one friend to have over, you are creating new links and possibilities for the type of transmission that all of our school/work/public event closures are trying to prevent. The symptoms of coronavirus take four to five days to manifest themselves. Someone who comes over looking well can transmit the virus.

### **Take care of yourself and your family, but maintain social distance.**

Exercise, take walks/runs outside, and stay connected through phone, video, and other social media. But when you go outside, do your best to maintain at least six feet between you and non-family members. If you have children, try not to use public facilities like playground structures, as coronavirus can live on plastic and metal for up to nine days.

The CDC offers tips and resources to reduce this burden, and other resources offer strategies to cope with the added stress during this time. The [CDC offers tips and resources](#) to reduce this burden, and other [resources offer strategies to cope](#) with the added stress during this time.

### **Reduce the frequency of going to stores, restaurants, and coffee shops for the time being.**

Of course trips to the grocery store will be necessary, but try to limit them and go at times when they are less busy. Remember to wash your hands thoroughly before and after your trip. And leave the medical masks and gloves for the medical professionals—they are needed to care for those who are sick. Maintain distance from others while shopping.

### **If you are sick, isolate yourself, stay home, and contact a medical professional.**

If you are sick, you should try to isolate yourself from the rest of your family within your residence as best as you can. If you have questions about whether you qualify or should get a coronavirus test, you can call your primary care team. Of course, in a medical emergency, call 911.

## What does it mean to Self-Quarantine?

- Stay home from work, school, and away from other public places until the self-quarantine period is over. All activities outside of your home are restricted, except for getting medical care.
- If you develop symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), call your healthcare provider immediately for instructions, and let them know you have been on self-quarantine for possible exposure.
- For medical emergencies, call 911 and notify the dispatch personnel that you have been on self-quarantine for possible COVID-19.
- Always practice good health hygiene including:
  - Covering your cough and sneezes.
  - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. If available, use a separate bathroom.
- Avoid sharing personal items with other people in your household, such as dishes, towels, and bedding.
- Clean all surfaces that are touched often, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, phones, keyboards, remote controls.