



PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Jeremy Owoh, Ed.D
Superintendent of Schools

System Goal: Outstanding Academic Achievement for ALL Scholars

March 11, 2020

Dear Pine Bluff School District Staff, Families, and Patrons:

The Pine Bluff School District is aware of ongoing concerns regarding the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and is closely monitoring the situation and making the necessary preparations in case the COVID-19 becomes prevalent in our community. According to Governor Asa Hutchinson, as of March 11, 2020, there has been 1 presumptively confirmed case of COVID-19 in a Pine Bluff hospital. He said the case has been tested by the Arkansas Department of Health and will be sent to the CDC for further testing. The patient has an out of state travel history, so it is likely they got the case through travel with another state. Dr. Smith, Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Health, said there is no evidence of spreading in the Pine Bluff community or anywhere else in the state.

The health and safety of our students and staff continue to be our highest priority, and we are following the guidance of the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our Janitorial Staff and Maintenance Department are charged with sanitizing our campuses on a daily basis, and we will also:

- Ensure all restrooms are continuously stocked with soap and paper towels, and encourage students and staff to wash hands frequently;
- Ensure principals and school nurses have the resources and guidance needed to detect and report symptoms exhibited at school and provide approved health guidance for any affected individuals;
- Work closely with the Jefferson County Health Department and the Arkansas Department of Health to continuously update our protocols as the situation continues and;
- Provide ongoing communication to families staff, and our patrons as new developments are learned.

We encourage everyone to practice good habits, including:

- Washing your hands regularly, especially after using the restroom and before preparing or consuming food. Wash your hands for 20 seconds, using soap and hot water. Be sure to also wash your fingertips.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hands or in the air. Always try to cough or sneeze into a tissue, and then throw the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue, cough/sneeze into your arm.
- As much as you can, avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If children are feeling sick, please keep them home from school. Allow them some time to feel better so that they do not risk infecting others.

The Pine Bluff School District appreciates your understanding in light of the situation and will continue to provide communication updates as the latest facts arise. Updates will be provided through District resources as they come to light.

Professionally,

The Pine Bluff School District Communication Department
Dr. Jeremy Owoh, Superintendent of Schools