

March 13, 2020

Dear School Superintendents:

Over the past few weeks, COVID-19 has evolved rapidly. While Tompkins County has no confirmed cases, there are confirmed cases in multiple counties in New York State, and I believe it is inevitable we will see cases here in Tompkins County. The Health Department has been working diligently with community partners to plan and respond to this emerging issue, but at this time it is necessary to take additional action to protect the health and well-being of our community.

I am recommending that school districts in Tompkins County close to students effective 12:00am March 14, 2020 until 12:00am April 13th, 2020. This recommendation applies to students; districts can make individual determinations about faculty and staff. We are making this decision for several reasons:

- To slow the potential spread of disease among groups of students in confined spaces.
- To protect vulnerable populations, including older adults, those who are immune-compromised, or have a chronic medical condition, especially heart or lung disease, and diabetes.
- To promote social distancing: putting space between yourself and others, limiting large gatherings, and refraining from handshakes and hugs.

I am hopeful that taking this unprecedented, proactive step will protect our community and limit the potential spread of disease.

Thank you,



Frank Kruppa

Public Health Director