



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE BOROUGH OF BRENTWOOD

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March 24, 20201

Dear Brentwood Families,

When our classrooms closed in March of 2020, we had no idea that we would be facing two unfamiliar health concerns. The first was the emergence of the Coronavirus and the second was the notification that our students and staff were exposed to Tuberculosis (TB). March 24, 2021 is recognized around the world as TB Awareness Day. To raise awareness in our community, this letter includes the latest facts available about Tuberculosis.

Key facts about Tuberculosis

- **A total of 1.4 million people died from TB in 2019. Worldwide, TB is one of the top 10 causes of death and the leading cause from a single infectious agent (above HIV/AIDS).**
- **In 2019, an estimated 10 million people fell ill with tuberculosis (TB) worldwide. 5.6 million men, 3.2 million women and 1.2 million children. TB is present in all countries and age groups. But TB is curable and preventable.**
- **In 2019, 1.2 million children fell ill with TB globally. Child and adolescent TB is often overlooked by health providers and can be difficult to diagnose and treat.**
- **In 2019, the 30 high TB burden countries accounted for 87% of new TB cases. Eight countries account for two thirds of the total, with India leading the count, followed by Indonesia, China, the Philippines, Pakistan, Nigeria, Bangladesh and South Africa.**
- **Globally, TB incidence is falling at about 2% per year and between 2015 and 2019 the cumulative reduction was 9%. This was less than halfway to the End TB Strategy milestone of 20% reduction between 2015 and 2020.**
- **An estimated 60 million lives were saved through TB diagnosis and treatment between 2000 and 2019.**
- **Ending the TB epidemic by 2030 is among the health targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

Tuberculosis (TB) is caused by bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) that most often affect the lungs. Tuberculosis is curable and preventable. When a person develops active TB disease, the symptoms (such as cough, fever, night sweats, or weight loss) may be mild for many months. This can lead to delays in seeking care, and results in transmission of the bacteria to others. People with active TB can infect 5–15 other people through close contact over the course of a year. Please communicate with your primary care physician or your child's pediatrician if these symptoms are present.

Sincerely,

Amy M. Burch, D.Ed.
Superintendent of the Brentwood Borough School District