

Dear Parents,

You may have heard of districts around us that have had situations with either staff or students testing positive for COVID 19. In most of the cases, the spread of the virus has been a result of activities outside the school walls. Surely, it is possible to have COVID 19 spread in school, but most of the situations so far have stemmed from social gatherings of family and friends as well as college students coming home for a long weekend.

The process for receiving information regarding a positive case will either come from a parent or the Health Department notifying us. Fortunately, we have yet to have a notification, but in time we are likely to get that call. If we were notified of a positive case, the school and health department would work closely together to identify students and staff that had been in close proximity to the affected student. Once identified, the school would notify the student's parents regarding the need to stay home until informed about the length of quarantine by the Health Department.

If there was a positive case in school, I would use the Skylert system to notify parents of the case and in what building it took place. In the time following, parents with students affected by quarantining would be contacted individually. If you do not receive a contact and have a child in the building, you may send your child to school the next day knowing we have made the appropriate contacts. Please also note, that in addition to our thorough cleaning processes, additional disinfecting would take place. Because of privacy laws, we cannot give you specific information regarding the student who tested positive.

All of the elementary and most of the middle school are in cohort learning groups. The cohort process limits the number of students needing to be quarantined. I will be honest though, typically schools are identifying between 15 and 25 students to be quarantined for each positive student case. So the number of cases at any one time would be part of the decision-making process regarding keeping a school open. Even though our schools are under one roof, they are still considered individual schools according to the Health Department and would be treated separately through the contact tracing process.

When students are home on quarantine, they will continue to have the responsibility to complete their school work as it will be assessed and/or graded. Communication regarding assignments would be given by the child's teacher, much like they would if they were home for a while with an extended illness prior to the pandemic. It is important that we continue the educational process to the greatest extent possible.

It is possible that a school building may have to close down for a day or more to complete the proper contact tracing if there was a positive case. Do not be alarmed if this is the case, it is just us being thorough making sure we have the right students quarantined. In the event we had a large outbreak and a building or even the district as a whole was affected, under the direction of the Health Department, we may have to temporarily move to remote learning. It is likely that after this quarantine period we would pick back up with in-person learning when the spread of the virus had once again subsided. We would provide an opportunity for students to receive school lunches during this period through a process of ordering and picking up.

Parents, you have done an incredible job assessing your children regarding their health before sending them to school each day. Taking a chance on sending a sick student to school can have a large effect on others. If you have any questions regarding how your child is feeling in the morning, please do not hesitate to keep them home. Just be sure to contact the school office regarding the absence.

School is going well and students are happy to be back with their friends. We appreciate your cooperation and patience as we continue to work through challenges with this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Vaughn E. White

Superintendent

