

Confirmed COVID-19 Case(s)

November 9, 2020

Dear Parents and Staff:

We were notified over the weekend and this morning of several new COVID cases in the school community. The first involves an individual who works with our students on the football team, and this has warranted the quarantining of Newtown High School athletes as part of the necessary protocol. In addition, we have a positive case that involves an employee of our transportation company (All Star), as well as a case at Reed and Newtown Middle School. These will result in the quarantining of students and staff across the district. However, actual transmission remains low across our schools, and we continue to monitor transmission of infection and trends within the community.

Through contact tracing in partnership with our Director of Health, those who had close contact with any of the individuals will be asked to remain quarantined. The Connecticut DPH defines close contact as spending at least 15 minutes (within one day) within 6 feet of a person with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 during their infectious period, or having direct contact with an infected person's droplets (e.g., cough, sneeze). Anyone who is considered a close contact with these individuals has been or is in the process of being notified by local health officials and provided with instructions for the appropriate steps to take.

As with controlling the spread of other viruses, we urge everyone to continue to discuss the following preventive measures with your children and family members:

- Wash your hands frequently, especially after using the restroom and before preparing or consuming food. Using soap and water, wash for about 20 seconds. Be sure to wash your fingertips. When soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hands or in the air. Always try to cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue, cough/sneeze inside the elbow of your arm.
- As much as you can, avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.
- Wear a face covering (mask) whenever there is a likelihood that you or your family members will be in the presence of others.
- Maintain social distancing (at least 6 feet) between yourself and others when outside of your home.

Below is the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which everyone should monitor in their family members:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher)
- Chills or shaking chills
- Uncontrolled new cough (not due to other known cause)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell

For additional information on COVID-19 symptoms, please see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

As always, staff and students exhibiting any of the above symptoms, or feeling ill, should call their medical provider to report their symptoms and ask about testing prior to seeking in-person care at a clinic, physician's office, or hospital.

For more information on what to do if you or a family member has possible symptoms, a diagnosis, or exposure to COVID-19, please see:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/Addendum-5-Interim-Guidance-for-Responding-to-COVID-19-Scenarios-in-CT-School-Districts.pdf>

Please be assured that Newtown Public Schools continues to sanitize and disinfect all buildings and classrooms throughout the week. **We ask that you continue to be mindful of the uptick in cases across our community and to do your best to minimize unnecessary travel or group gatherings in alignment with the Governor's recent response efforts:**

<https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2020/11-2020/Governor-Lamont-Coronavirus-Update-November-2>

We will continue to provide you with updates to keep you informed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, Superintendent