

Confirmed COVID-19 Case(s)

November 17, 2020

Dear Parents and Staff:

We were notified of additional COVID cases at Newtown Middle School and Middle Gate Elementary School, which have resulted in quarantining both students and staff. Based on contact tracing in partnership with our local health department, necessary quarantine protocols have impacted classrooms at Middle Gate, and we are currently monitoring staffing levels and coverage needed. We have coverage at the moment, but we will be assessing the status of all of our buildings in the next 24 hours. Those who are asked to quarantine will be working remotely.

Please know that we understand every decision we make impacts families, staff, and students throughout the community. That being said, our schools need to operate fully and effectively in order to maintain the safety and well-being of all members. As we move forward, we will share important and timely information with you as we recognize that our decisions also impact yours.

Our custodial staff continues to clean and sanitize our schools. Additionally, staff and leaders have been vigilant in ensuring students are implementing proper mitigation strategies. As with controlling the spread of other viruses, we urge parents to continue having discussions at home regarding the following preventive measures:

- 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>

Stay well.

Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, Superintendent