

AMESBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



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November 22, 2021

Good afternoon,

We are currently experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak stemming from a private event held on November 15, 2021 with roughly 250 people in attendance including many students grades 2-8. As of today, November 22nd, we have had 18 cases identified from this event which includes 16 cases stemming from the event directly and 2 cases of in-school transmission. We feel confident that we have contained current positive cases through identification and testing, and schools will remain open this week.

We have been diligent to identify and communicate with all attendees of that event and their close contacts in order to properly test students, with the goal of keeping all of our students safe and our schools open. We have rigorous health and safety protocols in place in all of our schools including mask wearing at all times except during lunch and when outdoors, and until last week, we had not definitively identified any in-school transmissions of the Coronavirus. Through contact tracing, we have been able to trace positive cases our students have had to functions and gatherings outside of school. I truly believe that our school buildings are one of the safest places our students can be in regards to the spread of the Coronavirus.

In order for the identified students to return to school, they needed to provide a negative COVID-19 test, and we provided take-home testing kits for students and siblings who attended the November 15th event. We also administered over 75 on-site tests this morning at Amesbury Middle School, Cashman Elementary School and Amesbury Elementary School for students who were unable to use the take-home test. We provided on-site testing for students who were identified as close contacts. Students whose COVID-19 test was negative were released to go to class. If their test was positive, they were sent home and have been instructed to quarantine for at least 10 days.

Close contacts will participate in on-site testing at school on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week prior to going to class. If you did not receive an email or phone call from a school nurse, then your student is not a close contact. Close contacts have been instructed to test daily or quarantine for 7 days after the date of notification of being a close contact.

With Thanksgiving later this week, I strongly encourage you to take appropriate precautions, especially at gatherings. We want our students to remain healthy and our schools to remain open, and you can help. Please also strongly consider getting your child vaccinated if you have not already. The Lower Merrimack Valley Regional Collaborative is holding clinics for children ages 5 through 11 and has a few spaces remaining for clinics tonight and next week. You can also make an appointment for anyone age 5 and older through www.vaxfinder.mass.gov.

Please reach out to your student's principal with any specific questions you may have.

Thank you,
Elizabeth McAndrews
Superintendent