

October 26, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Today, the Mequon-Thiensville School District was notified by the Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department that due to updates made by the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS), a reporting outage affected the timeliness of data flowing into the system. It has been shared with us that the Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department is delayed in the notification of COVID-19 positive cases due to this outage.

Additionally, within the last 24 hours, school and District officials have been made aware of 10 positive student cases of COVID-19 at Homestead High School. The district is in the process of completing contact tracing and will be in contact with families who are identified as close contacts as soon as possible.

Based on the increased number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Homestead High School and a lack of accurate health data from our local health department, **we believe the safest path forward is to temporarily transition ALL on campus learners at Homestead High School to distance learning.** It is vital that we have updated public health data to accurately assess the risk of providing on-campus learning for our students and staff members.

Beginning Tuesday, October 27, we will move forward with distance learning for all Homestead High School students. Additionally, participation in all in-person co-curricular activities is on hold at this time. **This closure will last until at least Monday, November 2, 2020.** Our ability to return to on campus learning will depend on updated information from the Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department, our ability to minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19, and the availability of our students and staff members. We will provide regular updates as we continue to monitor the situation.

While I know this is disappointing news, please know that we have planned for this scenario. Temporarily shifting to distance learning in response to community and school-based cases of COVID-19 is important in our concerted efforts to stop the spread of the virus. Educators at Homestead High School are prepared to deliver a high-quality distance learning experience for our students. Your student's teachers or a member of our administrative team will follow up with more details soon.

The health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff members remains our highest priority as we navigate this public health crisis. We continue to follow sound protocols aligned with guidance and support from local health officials to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect the health of our students and staff members.

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Positive Tests and Symptoms

If your child has tested positive for COVID-19 and you have not already contacted MTSD, please contact District Nurse Jessica Jost at jjost@mtsd.k12.wi.us. As a reminder, the primary symptoms of COVID-19 include shortness of breath, coughing, and fever or chills. Other symptoms include congestion, sore throat, diarrhea, abdominal pain, body aches, and loss of taste or smell. If your student begins to experience symptoms, please consult a healthcare provider and notify the school office.

Deep Cleaning

Today, Homestead High School staff worked remotely during the district wide in-service to allow our buildings and grounds department and cleaning staff to deep clean the building. All areas of the building were cleaned and disinfected, with a focus on frequently touched surfaces. This was a planned cleaning, and not in response to the recent rise in positive COVID-19 cases.

Meal Services

Breakfast and/or lunch is available for pick up at Homestead High School daily from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m., Monday-Friday. If your family has an extenuating circumstance that prevents you from picking up your meal(s), please contact Molly Bortin via email at bortin-molly@aramark.com.

Distance Learning and Canvas

For our on campus learners, your child(ren)'s teacher or a member of our administrative staff will be in contact with you today in preparation for distance learning instruction tomorrow. Students should be able to access courses and instructional material through Canvas. If parents/guardians have not yet created a Canvas Parent account, you are able to do so at any time to observe your student(s)'s courses. The directions to create a Canvas Parent account are available [here](#).

For our established distance learners, your instruction will continue uninterrupted.

Technology Access

Any students or families who need technical assistance during distance learning should work directly with your child(ren)'s teachers or Homestead's Research and Digital Learning Specialist, Suzy Zellmann (szellmann@mtsd.k12.wi.us). When technical issues arise, please submit a ticket to the MTSD Help Desk by clicking the link below.

[MTSD HELP DESK REQUEST FORM](#)

Student Services

If your student has an individualized education plan (IEP), your case manager will be reaching out soon to discuss how it will be implemented during distance learning. While we know remote instruction is not optimal, we are working hard to ensure a high-quality learning experience for all students and that connections between and among students and teachers continue.

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It is incredibly important that, as a school community, we support each other through these uncertain times. Considering last week's outage at the health department, we are thankful for those members of our community who are self-reporting when they have knowledge of a positive case of COVID-19. I encourage all parents/guardians not to do the job of contact tracing or speculation of positive cases, but rather to contact MTSD with the information you have.

The more we are able to slow the spread of COVID-19, the greater ability we have to continue offering on campus learning to our families. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly. As always, thank you for your patience, flexibility, and partnership.

With appreciation,

Eric Ebert
Principal