

October 27, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your flexibility and support as we work together to transition our students to distance learning, beginning today (October 27). With yesterday's news that we will temporarily close Homestead High School from on campus learning, I also provided an update on an increased number of positive students cases of COVID-19 in our school community. Additionally, I shared information from our local health department regarding a delay in the processing of positive COVID-19 cases.

Today we were notified about additional cases of COVID-19 that included exposure in our building last week. The purpose of this communication is to share an update on these concerns and our expected return to on-campus learning for all Homestead students.

COVID-19 Update and Contact Tracing

Since Sunday, October 25, we have communicated with families regarding 12 positive cases of COVID-19 at Homestead High School. Given the surge in cases since Sunday evening, contact tracing has been extensive. This afternoon, our student services team completed contact tracing for all cases reported since October 25. If you were not contacted by MTSD, your child was not deemed to be a close contact during the school day or during school related activities. Thank you for your patience during this process.

Collaboration with the Public Health Department

The Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department continues to communicate they are delayed in processing positive COVID-19 cases. Additionally, the data associated with the spread of the virus has not been updated on the Health Department's website since Friday, October 23. School and District officials will continue to partner with the Health Department to gain updated information regarding positive cases of COVID-19 in our schools and the impact of COVID-19 in Mequon and Thiensville zip codes. As I noted yesterday, it is vital that we have updated data to accurately assess the risk of providing on-campus learning.

Expected Return to On Campus Learning

The increased number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Homestead High School has significantly impacted our ability to offer on-campus instruction to our students. **Our temporary closure from on campus learning will extend through next week, with an expected return on November 9, 2020.**

Currently, over 20% of our students participating in on campus instruction have been affected by COVID-19 and are unavailable to attend in-person, either due to testing positive for the virus or having to

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quarantine at home due to coming in close contact with a positive case. An extended period of school closure is important in our efforts to stop the spread of the virus. We will continue to monitor the situation and provide regular updates in the days ahead. Team coaches and club leaders for each of our co-curricular activities will reach out directly to students and families related to participation during the temporary closure.

As a school and District, we have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff members—a priority that remains at the forefront of our decision making. A temporary shift to distance learning for all students allows us to mitigate risk associated with the spread of COVID-19 within our buildings. However, I recognize that when our students are not on campus, we have less control over their behaviors and activities.

That said, it is important that every member of our school community takes seriously the role we each play in preventing the spread. Our individual actions have significant implications on our ability to provide on campus instruction for those families who choose it. Our students need us, as educators and as guardians, to work together to ensure this remains an option for our students.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership. If you have any questions or concerns about this information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With appreciation,

Eric Ebert
Principal