



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

prepared & empowered

February 12, 2021

Dear Deering High School Students and Families,

This letter is to inform you that we learned yesterday one additional individual associated with Deering High School recently tested positive for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We are informing you out of an abundance of caution as the individual was not at school during what the CDC has determined was their infectious period, so there was no exposure within the school community.

Additionally, we want to remind you that the CDC has determined that the recent cases at Deering High School constitute an outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). An outbreak means that there are three or more cases of COVID-19 within a 14-day period that meet the CDC criteria for outbreak. However, an outbreak does not necessarily warrant a school closure.

Since we have already executed the appropriate measures to respond to these recent cases including notifying and quarantining all close contacts and implementing our enhanced cleaning protocols, we have determined it is safe to remain in school. We will continue to collaborate with the CDC, monitor the situation and inform you if there are any updates.

Due to privacy laws regarding health status, we are not able to disclose more specific information about the individual that has tested positive (such as their role, grade level they're associated with, etc.). However, please know that we are following our local and state protocols to ensure health and safety for our school community. These protocols include the following:

- Maine CDC or a school representative will contact you directly if you are identified as a close contact of someone who tested positive. Close contacts must quarantine for 10 days from their last known date of exposure. Testing for close contacts is recommended 5-7 days from exposure. Close contacts must quarantine for the full 10 days, even if their test result is negative. Secondary contacts of "close contacts", such as family members, can continue to go to work and school, as long as the quarantined person does not have symptoms or a positive test.
- Close contacts in schools are determined by the classroom configurations. This typically means that students within a given cohort along with the staff that interacted with them are close contacts. Other possible exposures (i.e., buses, after school programs, etc.) are also evaluated. Individuals who have been within six feet for more than 15 minutes are also considered to be close contacts.
- Deep cleaning of the spaces will take place after any known cases emerge.
- Testing is available for any symptomatic students or staff through our partnership with Greater Portland Health. If we were in a situation where a large number of students or staff needed testing because of an exposure, we have a relationship with Northern Lights to provide testing for non-symptomatic students and staff. Non-symptomatic individuals can also obtain testing through their providers. You can locate a convenient to you testing site at <https://get-tested-covid19.org/>. In general, these testing sites will bill your insurance and you will not have any out-of-pocket or copays as a result. If you encounter any hardship in procuring testing, please let your school nurse know.

Additional details about our protocols can be found here on our reopening website:

<https://sites.google.com/portlandschools.org/reopening-resources/health-safety/covid-19-response?authuser=0>.

We are hoping for the speedy recovery of our community member, and we are taking every precaution to maintain safe and healthy learning environments. Feel free to reach out to Co-Principals Dr. Ahmed or Ms. Dame, or the school nurse, Elizabeth Nalli, if you would like more information, and let's all continue to work together to wear our masks, practice good hand hygiene, and maintain physical distancing!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Townsend', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Aaron Townsend
Assistant Superintendent of School Management