

TOWN OF SUFFIELD

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First Selectman
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October 1, 2020

Dear Suffield Community & Town Employees,

We write today with news that is not unexpected. The Suffield Public Schools (SPS) contacted parents over the last week about COVID-19 cases and potential exposures. We are also aware of other cases impacting youth sports in town, including the Parks & Recreation soccer program. All of these instances originated outside of their respective schools/programs. The Town of Suffield Emergency Management, First Selectman's Office and SPS anticipated potential positive cases and developed plans for response and management in coordination with the North Central District Health Department. Included in those plans are contact tracing activities that have been conducted.

It is important to underscore that the virus spreads due to behavior. To date, Suffield confirms 186 positive cases, 19 probable cases and 20 deaths (Connecticut Department of Public Health). These numbers represent a sustained low number of positive cases due to the diligent efforts of residents. However, **we are concerned about maintaining these low case numbers** due to the following:

- **We've let our guard down** as evidenced by recent anecdotal behaviors throughout Suffield in regard to lack of adherence to precautionary guidelines.
- **Reporting across the state indicating an increase in cases among school-age children.** Many of these did not originate within recently reopened school systems but rather resulted from exposures from either family members or within the community. This highlights another potential source of transmission due to children either being asymptomatic carriers or exhibiting vague symptoms of COVID-19. We advise parents and children attending SPS to follow the health screening guidance provided by the school system.
- **Increased indoor activity as shorter and colder days quickly approach.**

Please be our partner in keeping the virus at bay and ensure that Suffield does not see an uptick as already evidenced in some of our neighboring communities. We ask that you strengthen your resolve and continue practicing safeguards and social distancing:

- Wear face masks in public indoors following latest sector rules

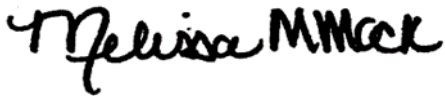
- Follow guidance for [sector rules regarding businesses and sports](#)
- Wear face masks in public outdoors when 6 feet of social distancing cannot be maintained

As a reminder, COVID-19 symptoms include the following with children mimicking those experienced by adults but generally to a milder degree:

- Cough
- shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- fever or chills
- muscle or body aches
- sore throat
- headache
- nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- runny/stuffy nose
- fatigue
- recent loss of taste/smell

Anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should contact their primary care provider to arrange testing. Those without a primary care provider should call 2-1-1 or visit the [211 website](#) for testing locations. Be well.

Sincerely,



Melissa M. Mack
First Selectwoman

Sincerely,



John Spencer
Director, Emergency Management

cc: Board of Selectmen