

December 15, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Our school division is informing parents and guardians that we were notified on December 15, 2020 that a student or staff member at Norton Elementary Middle School has been diagnosed with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The local health department has been notified and we are following protocols for assessing risks. The person has not been on school premises since Tuesday, December 8, 2020.

Norton City Schools will remain open at this time. We are working with the Wise County and City of Norton Health Department to identify anyone who had close contact with the person to determine if they might have been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. If you or your child are identified as having been potentially exposed, the Wise County and City of Norton Health Department will contact you with further guidance. *If you are not contacted by the health department or school division, you do not need to stay home or exclude yourself from activities at this time.*

Parents should continue to monitor their own health and the health of their families for [COVID-19 symptoms](#). Children with COVID-19 generally have mild, cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported in some children.

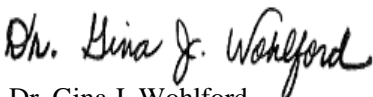
Children with certain underlying medical conditions, such as chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, or weak immune systems, might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Contact your child's healthcare provider regarding any concerns.

People without symptoms do not need to seek care or be tested. Those who become ill should contact their healthcare provider. Their doctor, in consultation with public health officials, will determine appropriate care and whether testing is necessary. If your child has been exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19, please report this to your school. This information will be kept confidential.

Schools continue to utilize Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations on [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces](#), to reduce viral transmission and keep our children and school personnel healthy and safe. Parents and family members can assist this effort by promoting healthy behaviors and following these practices:

- Stay home from school or work if sick, even if symptoms are mild.
- Wear a face covering in areas where physical distancing is difficult to maintain.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue (or sleeve), and then throw the tissue in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are often touched.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Take care of your health overall. Stay current on your vaccinations, including the flu vaccine, eat well, and exercise to help your body stay resilient.

The [Virginia Department of Health](#) provides information about COVID-19 and [frequently asked questions \(FAQ\)](#) from parents and concerned family members. The CDC offers [tips](#) to keep children healthy during this time. The Virginia Department of Education's produced [COVID-19: A Parent Guide for School Age Children](#) and provides additional considerations for [students with disabilities](#), [guidance for military families](#) and [social emotional wellness for parents and caregivers](#).



Dr. Gina J. Wohlford
Division Superintendent