



EAST GREENWICH TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

SAMUEL MICKLE BUILDING, 559 KINGS HIGHWAY, MICKLETON, NJ 08056

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Andrea Evans, Superintendent
Gregory Wilson, Business Administrator

W. Todd Jones, President of the Board of Education
Dr. Kimberley Chiodi, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Dear East Greenwich School Community,

The health and safety of our students and staff is our first priority. We are currently facing challenges associated with increased positivity rates and confirmed close contacts in our community and district. This means our ability to maintain a safe and appropriate in-person learning environment, as more students and staff are directed to quarantine, becomes increasingly difficult to sustain.

Today, we were notified that **2 individuals** have tested positive for Coronavirus Diseases 2019 (COVID-19). One individual tested positive at the Jeffrey Clark School, and one individual tested positive at the Samuel Mickle School. The district is coordinating closely with public health officials and following CDC, state, and local health department guidance in order to assure the health and safety of our community. Any student or staff member who is identified as being in close contact with a person who tested positive has been contacted by a school nurse or a school administrator. If you did not receive a call, you or your student was not identified as a close contact.

This is the third positive case of COVID-19 in two days. In two of the three cases, exposure occurred outside of the schools. Contact tracing on the third case is not yet completed. At this time, we understand the three cases to be separate exposures that are not linked together. However, this cannot be confirmed until contract tracing is completed.

Additionally, the increases in positive cases and mandatory quarantine orders have presented a significant staffing issue for our district. After consultation with the New Jersey Department of Health, **we are transitioning to a fully remote model of instruction from Wednesday, November 18th through Wednesday, December 2nd.** In-person instruction will resume on Thursday, December 3rd.

Wednesday, November 18th will be a typical, fully remote instructional day. The school principals will share additional information tomorrow to support the transition to 100% remote learning for all students.

This is an extremely difficult decision. I understand the need to have our buildings open for in-person instruction, and I understand the community's desire to have our buildings open for in-person instruction.

I was hopeful we would not need to close for in-person instruction unless required to do so by Executive Order. However, I must also listen to the guidance of the Department of Health and quarantine staff who are close contacts in order to protect our students and staff by mitigating the spread. At the conclusion of these two weeks, I am hopeful the rate of spread in Gloucester County and EG will be reduced, thus allowing us to continue with in-person instruction.

I am certainly deeply saddened and disappointed by this course of events, but I remain committed to making decisions which prioritize the health and safety of our students, staff and community.

We encourage parents and students to continue following the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention promoted safeguards, such as:

- Staying home when you are sick;
- Washing hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds;
- Covering coughs and sneezes and properly disposing of tissues;
- Limiting close contact with people who are sick and not sharing food, drinks and utensils;
- Practicing social distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart);
- Wearing a face covering while in school; and
- Continuing to monitor your health for symptoms.

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As always, we appreciate our community's support and cooperation. You can assist us by remaining vigilant but sensible in your approach to dealing with this health concern. Should you have any questions about this situation, please feel free to contact the school principals or me.

RESOURCES

- a. NJDOH COVID-19 information for Communities and the General Public
https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_community.shtml
- b. Get the facts about Coronavirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- c. Symptoms of COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- d. Testing: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/index.html>
- e. How to Protect Yourself: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
- f. What to Do if You Are Sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Sincerely,

Andrea Evans

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