

November 11, 2020

Dear Lamoille North Families and Staff,

Vermont has seen an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases recently, and just today, recorded a new high of 72 cases in Vermont. Unfortunately, our schools are not immune to this concerning trend.

As you know from my recent communications, we had two confirmed cases within our school community, one at GMTCC and one at Waterville Elementary School. Today, I learned that there are two more confirmed COVID-19 cases, one at Lamoille Union Middle School and a second confirmed case at GMTCC, in the same program as the original case. Contact tracing continues to be underway at GMTCC and Waterville Elementary School and will begin at Lamoille Union Middle School. Quarantine and COVID-19 testing will be recommended by the Vermont Department of Health (VTDOH) for those who are considered close contacts of the confirmed cases.

I have spoken at length today with school administration and the VTDOH to address this situation. Because contact tracers are attempting to manage the increased numbers of cases in the state, we need to give them the time they need to complete thorough contact tracing; therefore, out of an abundance of caution, we are moving Lamoille Union Middle and High Schools, and Waterville Elementary School to full remote learning for Thursday and Friday of this week, at a minimum, to allow for complete contact tracing and for deep cleaning.

As you know, GMTCC has already moved to full remote learning until November 16th, for a majority of their programs. Students should expect to hear from their schools and teachers about learning schedules for Thursday and Friday. As always, we consider student safety our top priority.

Given that there are no confirmed cases or suspected close contacts of active cases involving the need for contact tracing at Cambridge Elementary School, Eden Central School, Hyde Park Elementary School and Johnson Elementary School, **they will remain open** for their regular schedules.

As a general reminder for all, it is more important than ever to stay home and contact your medical provider if you or your children are experiencing any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. In addition, we are asking siblings and/or children of someone under quarantine or with a confirmed COVID-19 case, to also quarantine and undergo COVID-19 testing.

Thank you for continuing to take safety precautions. I cannot stress enough how important it is to practice the same safety precautions in our communities as we do in our schools. I have often said that when we do things together for a common goal, we can accomplish anything. We can help reverse the state trend by following all established safety protocols.

I know that you may feel worried. Our worry over health and safety can manifest itself in many different ways. Please take time to talk to trusted friends and family members and take care of yourselves. Rely on facts, and not speculation. And finally, please extend support and well wishes to the individuals and families impacted by COVID-19 at this time.

I am sending you my best affection.

Warmly,

Catherine Gallagher, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
Lamoille North Supervisory Union