

November 18, 2020

Dear Lamoille North Families,

I am writing on this “almost” winter evening to inform you that barring any new information from the Vermont Department of Health (VTDOH) about more cases of COVID-19, we are poised to return to regular schedules tomorrow at GMTCC, Lamoille Union Middle and High School, Cambridge Elementary School and Waterville Elementary School. Students will return to their regular schedules with the exception of those who may still be under quarantine. All other Lamoille North schools will operate schedules as usual.

Lamoille North, in concert with other regions, have implemented the following procedures in the event of a confirmed case. The VTDOH will identify the pod or person that requires quarantine and the school impacted will move to full remote learning for 48 hours in order for a thorough deep cleaning and an investigation of the case, which includes contact tracing to identify all those who may have come into close contact with the confirmed positive case. In the event the VTDOH is unable to complete contact tracing within this time frame, we will extend the remote learning time in order to complete the tracing. After the contact tracing is complete, we will resume regular school schedules with the exception of those who may still be under quarantine.

Recently, Governor Scott announced new mitigation measures. To slow the spread of COVID-19 as cases and hospitalizations rise in Vermont and throughout the nation, Governor Scott announced some temporary restrictions on social gatherings and some operations.

“Attendance at all public and private social gatherings, indoor and outdoor, including social gatherings incidental to ceremonies, holiday gatherings, parties and celebrations, shall be limited to participation with only members of a single household. Individuals who live alone may gather with members of their immediate family residing in a different household.”

“The cross-state travel map has been suspended, officials said. That means anyone traveling or returning to Vermont must quarantine for 14 days (or 7 days followed by a negative COVID-19 test) – no matter where they are coming from or traveling to. Essential travel is still exempt from quarantine rules, including for school, work, personal safety, medical care, care of others, parental shared custody, or for food, beverage or medicine.”

We know that in-person instruction is best for our students. Keeping one another safe and healthy is our shared priority, and fundamental for keeping schools open for in-person learning. We have opened slowly and thoughtfully with the goal of in-person instruction at the forefront of our efforts. By being extra vigilant at adhering to safety

guidelines, especially as we approach the holidays, we have a better chance of being able to operate schools for the purposes they were intended.

We understand the draw of social gatherings. We gather for our work, school, to receive services and for our wellbeing. However, we all need to follow guidelines judiciously. In doing so, there may still be cases that arise. When and if that happens, there is no room for shame or blame. We need to support and care for our communities.

As always, I will keep you apprised of information as I receive it, whether from our schools or from the State of Vermont officials. As Health Commissioner, Dr. Levine, touched on in the most recent press conference, things could change rapidly and new mandates could come from our state officials at any time.

Please keep those affected by COVID-19 in our communities and beyond in your thoughts.

Have a wonderful evening.

My best to you,

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