

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Dear Lamoille North Families and Staff:

I write to you this afternoon with an update regarding the status of COVID-19 in Vermont. As of this writing, health officials have announced that there are two presumed cases of COVID-19 in the state of Vermont. Both cases involve adults who are currently being treated. The Vermont Department of Health continues to update their website daily at 1:00 p.m. As of today, the guidance remains unchanged and emphasizes prevention (hand washing, staying home when sick, and using cough/sneeze etiquette). Please refer to the full website for all information related to COVID-19. ([www.healthvermont.gov](http://www.healthvermont.gov))

The Vermont Agency of Education (VT AOE) and the Vermont Department of Health (VT DOH) have now issued technical guidance for school officials to use in situations warranting either school closure or school dismissal in the event of a novel coronavirus outbreak. School closure means closing a school and sending all students and employees home. School dismissal means that a school might stay open for employees while the children stay home. Keeping facilities open during a dismissal allows teachers to develop and deliver lessons and materials remotely to maintain continuity of teaching and learning and allows other staff members to continue to provide services and help with additional response efforts. **No decisions regarding school closure and dismissal have been made and will only be made upon the advice of the Commissioner of Health and Secretary of Education if needed.** Please see this technical guidance on the LNSU website at [www.lnsu.org](http://www.lnsu.org). Building administrators, directors of food services, facilities, technology, and our school nurses will be working with their respective teams to plan for how to meet the needs of our students and families in the event the normal school routine is disrupted for any amount of time.

We are carefully reviewing all school and community events, including activities where there may be gatherings of many people from around the state. As you can see, colleges, businesses, and professional sports leagues, to name a few, have made announcements that they are suspending normal operations. People are taking this pandemic seriously. As such, many events in the state have already been cancelled by event organizers such as the Junior Iron Chef Competition and the Future Business Leaders of America conference; student venues at CCV and Champlain College cancelled their events prior to today. **As of today, Lamoille North schools have canceled any out of state trips for the remainder of the year. If you have any questions about the trips and reimbursement options please contact the building administrators.** We will change, modify, postpone or cancel plans in consultation with the Vermont Department of Health as this public health situation evolves and provide updates to you about school events and activities as plans change.

We continue to recognize that we are in a fluid and evolving state with respect to this virus and the changing nature of it is continuing to cause anxiety for many. We are seeking guidance continually and working to develop answers specific to Lamoille North. As with every other challenge or unexpected development we face as a community, we will work together to find the opportunities for growth and success, attend thoughtfully to community needs, and support one another. Supporting one another right now is the best thing we can do to manage our own uncertainties and concerns.

We continue to be available to all of you should you have concerns or questions. You should also feel free to reach out to the Vermont Department of Health by calling the main number at 802-863-7240 or by dialing 2-1-1.

We care very much about our communities and the people who comprise Lamoille North schools. We will continue to update you as new information becomes available.

My best to all of you,

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