

Update, October 8, 2020

Dear PCSD Families,

The Portage Community School District remains vigilant in the efforts to control the spread of COVID-19. There is an ongoing need for the support and active engagement of students, staff, and families as the community spread has increased in Columbia and Marquette counties. The district maintains a close collaborative relationship with Columbia and Marquette County Health Departments for contact tracing, close contact notifications and return to school timeframes. Physical distancing is a key piece in all settings and interactions in mitigating the spread. The continued correct use of face coverings is essential.

Since our last update, seven additional positive cases of COVID-19 have impacted the Portage Community School District (17 Total Cases). Individuals across the district are currently being asked to quarantine due to close contacts that they have had from both inside and outside the district. The school nurses monitor close contacts and continue to be in touch with them in case they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19. Unfortunately, these situations can necessitate the transfer from in-person learning to At-Home/Remote Learning for short periods of time. This week there were a few families from Rusch Elementary school that were impacted, and have already been made aware of this need and will not be allowed to return to the classroom or building during the designated time of quarantine.

Contact school before sending your student(s) if they meet any of the criteria:

- Someone in the household has been tested for COVID-19 and results are pending
- Someone in the household is ill with COVID-19 symptoms (see list below)
- Fever (temperature 100.4° F or higher)
- Cough
- Trouble breathing
- Chills
- Muscle/body aches
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- Runny nose or nasal congestion
- Fatigue

- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

If students show up, or begin having symptoms during the school day, contact with the family will be made by the school nurse or health services staff for pick up. Each situation is unique, therefore the next steps are provided at that time.

What to Expect

If your child is designated a close contact to a person with COVID-19 for this situation, you would already have received a separate communication via email or phone call with special instructions about quarantine: monitoring symptoms, testing, and how to keep others in your home from getting sick.

If your child is not designated close contact to a person with COVID-19 for this situation in our school district, you will not receive another letter or phone call. However, everyone in your household should continue to stay home as much as possible, wash their hands frequently, keep 6 feet away from others, wear a mask or cloth face covering, monitor for symptoms of COVID-19, and seek medical care when sick.

Staff from the Columbia County Health and Human Services Division of Public Health or Marquette County Health Department may reach out to you with questions. Please assist them as they work to investigate and control COVID-19 in our schools and community.

Prevent Further Spread

The following guidelines will help to prevent further spread of illness at our school:

- Notify the school if your child is diagnosed with COVID-19 and keep the child home
- Notify the school if your child had contact with someone who you know was diagnosed with COVID-19 and
- Keep students home from school if they are sick.
- Encourage key habits: frequent handwashing, cover coughs and sneezes, use of face coverings in public, and staying home as much as possible.

If you have any questions, please call PCSD School Nursing and Health Services staff at 608/742-4879, extension 4022. We are all in this together. Let's each do our part.

Daily Student Self Screening for COVID-19

Expectations:

-All students reporting to a school building or school-sponsored event will answer these screening questions before reporting to the school building or other site.

-Student absences shall follow usual procedures for reporting personal absence to the school office. Please include symptoms of illness when reporting.

-If you answer YES to any of the questions, you will stay home.

-Parents/guardians shall complete this self screening tool daily before sending their child/children to the school bus, school building, or school-sponsored event.

1. Do you have any of the following symptoms, even if your symptoms seem mild?
(YES or NO)

- Cough (new onset or worsening of chronic cough)
- Shortness of breath
- Fever (100.4°F oral equivalent or higher)
- Chills (unusual for you)
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat (unusual for you)
- Runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea or abdominal pain
- Fatigue

People with these symptoms or combinations of symptoms may have COVID-19.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), you should contact your health care provider and ask to be tested. If you do not have a health care provider, complete an [online health screening assessment](#), or go to a [community testing site](#).

If any of the following apply to your household, notify the school nurse immediately.

In the past 14 days, have you [tested positive for COVID-19](#)? Stay home and follow the isolation instructions provided by the testing site, or local health department.

In the past 14 days, have you been tested for COVID-19 because you had symptoms? Stay home and follow isolation instructions provided by the testing site, or local health department.

In the past 14 days, have you been tested for COVID-19 but were asymptomatic? Stay home and follow quarantine instructions provided by the testing site or local health department.

In the past 14 days, have you been advised to quarantine due to close contact with a person confirmed to have COVID-19? Stay home and follow quarantine instructions provided by the local health department. Even if you get a negative COVID-19 test result, you must complete the 14 days of quarantine.

In the past 14 days, have you cared for, resided with, or had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19? Stay home and follow quarantine instructions provided by the local health department.

In the past 14 days, have you traveled outside of the United States, or been on a cruise ship or river cruise voyage? Stay home and follow DHS Guidelines that state to self quarantine and self monitor for symptoms twice each day, for 14 days.

This guidance is subject to change based upon local, state and national guidance.

Additional note: If you traveled within the United States, including in Wisconsin but away from your local community, DHS Guidelines state to self monitor for symptoms twice each day, for 14 days while maintaining 6 feet social distancing and properly wearing a mask when you go out. Here is a tool to track your symptoms. See page 3 for the chart.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fpr-event-getting-sick%2Fwhen-its-safe.html

Public Health Madison Dane County

<https://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/forward-dane/requirements>

Wisconsin Department of Health Services

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/symptoms.htm>

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Symptom tracking tool, page 3

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02598a.pdf>

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Travel

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/travel.htm#:~:text=COVID%2D19%20is%20st ill%20spreading,including%20travel%20within%20the%20state.>

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