

Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools

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Our schools are caring, creative, and equitable communities that empower all children to build on their talents and passions to grow into engaged citizens and life-long learners.

10/23/2020

Dear MRPS Community,

Please join me in sending healing thoughts to our infected community members. I have witnessed this community pull together on multiple occasions and our collective positive vibes to those most directly impacted can go a very long way.

Ryan Heraty, Meghan Spaulding (UES nurse), and I met with the team of epidemiologists and contact tracers at the Department of Health (DOH) this morning. Dr. Breena Holmes, lead pediatrician with the DOH, was also in attendance. The Vermont Epidemiology team is applying the updated definition of close contact to all cases. It means contact tracers will ask cases additional questions and people will think a little differently about who might be their close contacts. This doesn't mean that our understanding of the nature of the virus, or how it spreads, has changed. It helps us refine our understanding of what a close contact is.

At this time, the contact tracing team has no evidence to suggest that this positive case was transmitted through contact with our other infected POD. We have provided the team all the information we can to help them better understand how the infection happened. This contact tracing team has proven time and again that they are excellent at what they do and they have my full trust. Please help them by answering your phone.

We are also collaborating with the DOH regarding the testing capacity in this community--Montpelier specifically. We know that the best time to get the most accurate results from testing is seven days after exposure and are pushing to have a pop testing site next Wednesday, hopefully on one of our campuses. We will be in touch as soon as we know more.

Because the DOH does not believe the hockey situation to be contained and we have this new positive case, we will be keeping UES virtual next week. Should you have a child at UES, Ryan Heraty and your child's teacher will be in touch with all you need to know regarding technology access and learning opportunities. We have planned for this and our excellent staff at UES will be ready. The virtual week will allow the contact tracers time to do their work and allow results

from future tests to come back. At this moment, our plan is to have UES commence in person instruction on November 2nd. Should this change, we will notify you.

I recognize that the virtual week may be very welcome news for some while at the same time being incredibly hard on others. I do not take these decisions lightly. As a working parent who is currently working twelve plus hours a day, I understand the strain that this puts on working families. Ryan and I firmly believe in our system we have established and will look forward to welcoming kids back to in person learning when we have deemed that we have all the information we have regarding safety.

As always, please contact me or your principal if you have any questions. We are dedicated to helping everyone involved move through this uncertain and stressful situation as smoothly as possible.

Sincerely,
Libby Bonesteel
Superintendent