



BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

238 KENSINGTON ROAD • BERLIN, CONNECTICUT 06037-2648
OFFICE (860) 828-6581 • FAX (860) 829-0832

BRIAN J. BENIGNI
SUPERINTENDENT
OF SCHOOLS

ERIN K. McGURK, Ed.D.
ASSISTANT
SUPERINTENDENT

LINDA HOLIAN
DIRECTOR OF PUPIL
PERSONNEL SERVICES

JEFFREY P. CUGNO
DIRECTOR OF
BUSINESS OPERATIONS

DENISE M. PARSONS
DIRECTOR OF
HUMAN RESOURCES

November 30, 2020

Dear Parents and Community Members:

This past weekend and earlier this morning, we were notified that a total of five members of our school community have tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19) and three of the five individuals reside in the same home. All of the affected people have been instructed to remain home in self-isolation for 10 days and have been provided with additional instructions to follow prior to returning to school. Family members have also been instructed to self-quarantine and get tested.

One individual was last in McGee School on Tuesday, November 24. Three individuals were last in Willard School on Thursday, November 19; Friday, November 20; and Tuesday, November 24 respectively. One individual was last in Berlin High School on Friday, November 20. Anyone who is considered a “close contact” with these individuals has been contacted or will be contacted by school or local health officials and provided with instructions on the appropriate steps to take.

COVID-19 is spread mainly via person-to-person contact through contaminated air droplets from coughing and sneezing by an infected person. As with controlling the spread of other viruses, we urge everyone to discuss the following preventive measures with your children and family members:

- Wash your hands frequently, but especially after using the restroom and before preparing or consuming food. Using soap and hot water, wash for about 20 seconds. Be sure to also wash your fingertips. When soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hands or in the air. Always try to cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue, cough/sneeze inside the elbow of your arm.
- As much as you can, avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.
- Wear a face covering (mask) whenever there is a likelihood that you or your family members will be in the presence of others.
- Maintain social distancing (at least 6 feet) between yourself and others when outside of your home.

Below is the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which everyone should monitor in their family members:

- Fever (100° Fahrenheit or higher)
- Chills or shaking chills
- Uncontrolled new cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell

For additional information on COVID-19 symptoms, please see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

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medical provider to report their symptoms and ask about testing prior to seeking in-person care at a clinic, physician's office, or hospital.

For more information on what to do if you or a family member has possible symptoms, a diagnosis, or exposure to COVID-19, please see *Addendum 5: Interim Guidance for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in Connecticut School Districts*, available here:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/COVID19/COVID-19-Resources-for-Families-and-Educators/Addendums-and-FAQs>

We are closely monitoring this situation and working with the Central Connecticut Health District and will provide you with updates as we know more. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brian Benigni
Superintendent of Schools