

# Parent Information

# RESPONSE TO CONFIRMED COVID-19, EITHER STAFF OR STUDENT

We are working with our staff, our partners and the Missoula City County Health Department (MCCHD), and our students and families to create a safe environment for in-person learning at our 18 school sites. In order to allow our staff and our families to plan ahead, we want to share some basic information about our actions in the event we have a COVID-19 confirmed case or close contact within the district.

## Definitions

<b>Close Contact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A close contact is defined as anyone who has been within 6 feet or less of someone for 15 minutes or more; minutes can be cumulative.</li> <li>• A person is only determined to be a close contact, when they are in direct contact with a confirmed case.</li> <li>• A secondary contact, a contact of a close contact, is not considered a close contact. In other words, a contact of a contact is not a close contact.</li> <li>• <u>The MCCHD will determine and notify the close contacts, not the school.</u></li> </ul>
<b>Quarantine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A requirement that separates and restricts movement of an individual exposed to Covid 19 to see if they become sick.</li> <li>• May not come to school or activities -14 days, even if they test negative for COVID-19 during this time.</li> <li>• The MCCHD will determine who will be required to quarantine.</li> <li>• The MCCHD will determine the start and end date of the quarantine. School staff can ask for a verification to readmit the student or staff to school.</li> </ul>

## Health Department Actions

### What if a staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19?



- MCCHD will contact the individual staff member or student and start an investigation, also known as contact tracing.
- MCCHD will determine close contacts by talking with the confirmed positive case.
- MCCHD will contact the school (nurse or Principal) to ask for seating charts and contact information for students or staff considered to be close contacts.
- MCCHD will not share personal information about the confirmed positive case as that information is protected by HIPAA.

- MCCHD will contact the close contacts and discuss the quarantine procedures. This is not the responsibility of the school.
- MCCHD will supply the staff or student with a letter verifying they have been released to return to school / work.

### What if a student or staff member is determined by MCCHD to be a close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case?

- The MCCHD will determine and notify the close contacts. Remember, a contact of a contact is not a close contact. Parents will be notified by MCCHD if their child is considered a close contact.
- The MCCHD will require that the staff member or student to quarantine at home until their 14-day quarantine period is complete.
- The MCCHD will define the start and end dates of the quarantine period. (Typically the 14-day quarantine starts when the individual was last exposed to the confirmed case.)
- While a close contact may be tested during the 14-day quarantine, a negative test will not shorten their length of quarantine.

## MCPS Actions

### What if a staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19?

- We will uphold the directions from the MCCHD and we will not allow the staff or students to attend school until released from isolation/quarantine by MCCHD.
- These are the current criteria used by MCCHD for release from isolation:
  - At least 24 hours have passed since their fever returned to normal without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
  - Their respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, etc.) have improved, AND
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- School personnel will ask for written verification that the quarantine period has ended.

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### Will we message the other students or staff in the school when we have a confirmed case?

- Depending on the number of students or staff involved, there may be a need to send a general message to other families or staff in the class or in the school.
- Any messaging will protect the confidentiality of the student or staff member involved.
- If a message is needed, we will work directly with the county health department to produce the message in a timely manner.
- Parents will be notified directly from the county health department if your student is considered to be a close contact of a confirmed case.

### Will the school or classroom need to close when we have a confirmed case?

- The school or classroom may not need to close.
- The decision for school or classroom closure will depend on the amount of spread within the school or classroom community. The decision will be made with advice and guidance from the MCCHD.
- The school will communicate with MCCHD to effectively contact trace. If it is determined that a closure would help with contact tracing, while reducing spread, then the school or class may close for a short period of time (2-7 days).
- The affected area(s) will be identified and temporarily closed off for cleaning.
- If it is determined that a large portion of a particular class is placed in quarantine, the decision may be to move to remote learning for that class.

### What if a staff member or student shows symptoms during the school day?

- We will follow our typical school procedures for sick individuals.
- A student who feels ill and/or displays symptoms of COVID-19 will be placed in an isolated room or area.
- The student's family will be notified immediately and informed to pick up the student and seek medical care.
- Staff members who feel ill during the school day will also be sent home by their supervisors, advised to seek medical care and not return to school until their symptoms are resolved.

## Your Actions

### What if parents are concerned about the health of their own student, who may not be a close contact, but may be in the same class or school?

- If you are concerned and wondering if your student is a close contact, it is important to remember that you would have been contacted by MCCHD if your student is considered a close contact.
- If you have COVID-19 related questions, please contact the MCCHD help line: 258-INFO.
- If you have medical questions or concerns regarding your student, please contact your medical provider.

### When can the student or staff member return to school?

- If the student/staff is accepted for testing, they should not be in school while waiting for test results.
- If the student/staff has been told to quarantine by MCCHD, see guidance for close contact.
- The student/staff tested positive for COVID-19, they will be allowed to return to school only after:
  - The required isolation time has ended
  - It has been 10 days since symptoms first appeared
  - Symptoms have improved
  - No presence of fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications
  - The student/staff has been cleared by MCCHD to do so.
- Only MCCHD/Health Officer can release the student or staff member to return to school. Please provide the school with documentation from the MCCHD stating that it is safe for the student/staff to return to school. The school reserves the right to send the student/staff home if such documentation is not provided.



**Please, don't forget to  
wear a mask!**