



October 12, 2020

Dear VCS Staff and Families:

The District was informed today that a student at Pathways Alternative High School has tested positive for COVID-19. The school principal, Mr. Place, immediately implemented our contact tracing plan to identify people who were in direct contact with this student. Direct contact is defined as being within six feet of a person with a confirmed case for more than fifteen minutes. At this time, there have been no close contacts identified, but VCS will cooperate with the Kalamazoo County Health and Human Services Department regarding the identification of close contacts and implementation of screening and testing protocols for students and staff if necessary. We have been working closely with the Kalamazoo County Health Department to plan for a scenario like this one. Contact tracing is the key to quickly identifying and isolating those people affected so we can safely continue to hold in-person classes.

We will continue to be diligent in all our efforts to keep our students and staff members safe while keeping our schools open for in-person instruction. The safety measures include daily health checks, required facial coverings, social distancing when possible, frequent handwashing, and sanitizing, disinfecting common touch areas along with daily facility cleaning and disinfecting.

The VCS Preparedness and Response Plan regarding a COVID+ case will be followed and is summarized below:

- *Symptomatic students and staff will need to follow all of the CDC and Kalamazoo Health and Human Services Department guidelines before returning to school.*
- *Staff and families will be notified of the presence of any laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in the classroom and/or school to encourage closer observations for any symptoms at home. This notification will be made while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.*
- *In the event of any laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed case of COVID-19, the Kalamazoo County Health and Human Services Department will initiate contact tracing. Anyone who was within close contact of the identified case will be asked to quarantine up to 14 days after exposure.*
- *Staff will be provided with guidance and training regarding confidentiality laws and statutes protecting student and staff privacy related to health information.*
- *VCS will not release the names of anyone who was diagnosed with COVID-19, as this is protected health information. VCS will only acknowledge a positive case and will discourage parents and community members from engaging in discussion related to the identity of the individual(s) diagnosed with COVID-19.*
- *Staff who have been confirmed with a case of COVID-19 will return to the workplace only after they are no longer infectious. Local health officials will provide instruction about their return to work, using up-to-date CDC guidelines for this determination.*
- *Classrooms, buses and common areas will be cleaned using approved sanitizers by staff equipped with appropriate PPE. Smaller areas, whenever possible, will be closed for 24 hours before allowing staff or students to return to the area.*

This notification has also been posted on our district website at www.vicksburgschools.org and sent to all VCS families via our SkyAlert system. Your support is always appreciated as we work through each unique situation.

Sincerely,

Keevin J. O'Neill, Superintendent