



March 12, 2021

Dear School Community:

The District was informed today that a staff member at Tobey Elementary has tested positive for COVID-19. The building principal, Mr. Barwegen, immediately implemented our contact tracing plan to identify people who were in direct contact with this staff member. Direct contact is defined as being within six feet of a person with a confirmed case for fifteen or more cumulative minutes.

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. 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.

Parents of students that have been in close contact with the COVID-19 positive staff member have been notified that their children will need to be quarantined at home for 10 days to watch for symptoms. Virtual lessons will be provided to these students so they do not fall behind in their studies.

We will continue to be diligent in all our efforts to keep our students and staff members safe. 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.

We recommend taking action to help limit the spread of COVID-19, even if staff members or students are not experiencing symptoms:

- **Wear a mask** (covering mouth and nose) while in public places or if people who do not live with you must visit your home.
- **Practice social distancing when possible** (maintaining a distance of 6 feet apart).
- **Practice frequent handwashing** (using soap for 20 seconds or hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol).
- **Follow [capacity restrictions](#)** of social gatherings.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes** with a tissue or with the inside of your elbow and immediately wash your hands.
- **Stay home if you are sick;** you can also [get tested](#).

Thank you for understanding that, due to medical privacy laws, we are not able to release the names of individuals with COVID-19. We will continue to communicate changes and updates with you. With your participation, we believe we can maintain a safe environment while also providing quality education.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, please call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services COVID-19 Hotline at 888-535-6136 or visit Michigan.gov/coronavirus.

Sincerely,

Keevin J. O'Neill
Superintendent