

Parents and Staff,

We know that guidance concerning COVID-19 has raised many questions and concerns. The purpose of this memo is to provide an update from the Florida Department of Health and notify parents and staff of the procedure that will be followed in the event a positive case of COVID-19 is identified in the school system. We have been planning the reopening of school since March and, although information continues to change, we want to provide you with the latest and most current information. The procedure for excluding students from school is based on recommendations from the Florida Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In trying to be transparent and provide clear information, the Department of Health recommends the following:

- All teachers, staff, and students should wear masks, unless there is a medical reason why a mask cannot be worn. Even when wearing masks, there may be times when teachers, staff, or students may be excluded from school, for example, after being in contact with a potentially positive individual for a sustained period of time, which is defined as being within 6 feet of others for a period of 15 minutes or longer. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by health department disease investigation personnel working closely with school district personnel. Staff and parents will be notified by the school district if a child needs to be excluded and the child's demographic information will be given to the health department for contact tracing. Health department personnel will call the parent of the child directly, to provide the proper guidance. Staff who need to be excluded will also be contacted and provided guidance.
- If your child has been identified as having been in contact with a positive case, he/she will be excluded and should not return to school, even if they are tested and the result is negative. The guidance for contact to a positive case is to isolate and monitor your health and temperature for a period of 14 days after the last contact with the positive case. The health department will give you the date that your child is able to return to school and will provide you with a clearance letter.
- If your child becomes symptomatic during the exclusion period, the contact tracing arm of the health department can provide guidance for testing or you can consult with your personal health care provider. Again, if the test is negative, an affected staff member or student may not return to school during the 14 day exclusion period. If the test is positive, the health department will contact you with new guidance and recommendations. You are always welcome to contact your personal health care provider.
- Certain tests are not considered diagnostic for COVID-19. The Florida Department of Health has stated that for school staff and students, the PCR test is the gold standard and

preferred test. Antibody tests are not diagnostic for COVID-19. Rapid tests are available; however, these rapid tests should be confirmed with PCR testing as well. Testing is available at no out of pocket expense to you or your family through the Santa Rosa County Testing sites located Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Milton Community Center in Milton and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Tiger Point Community Center in Gulf Breeze. Registration is required by calling the Sacred Heart Screening line at 850-746-2684. Information can be obtained from your school's health clinic and is posted on the county's Emergency Management web site.

- If a staff member or a child is waiting on the result of a COVID test - do not come to school. While waiting on a test, you should assume that you are positive and isolate and monitor until your test result is received. If your test is positive, please continue to let the school know of your situation. The health department will contact you to obtain specific information.
- If you have questions specific to COVID, please call the health department's call center at 850- 564-2307. If the call center cannot provide you the specific information you are seeking, they will take your information and put you in touch with the investigative branch. As always, you are welcome to contact your private health care providers.
- A new flow chart for parents will be posted on our web site today that will include a decision tree to help navigate daily screening.
- This is a new experience for all of us in both the health care field and education. Please know that we are working closely with the Florida Department of Health and their staff to provide the guidance and necessary steps to keep our students and our staff as safe as possible under these circumstances. We all know that, even though the changes can be frustrating, we are all trying to do our best for each student, parent, staff member, and our community by trying to provide the most up to date information and recommendations. We wish for all a safe and healthy year ahead.