



RICHLAND COUNTY COMMUNITY UNIT NO. 1

1100 EAST LAUREL STREET - OLNEY, ILLINOIS 62450 - P/618-395-2324 - F/618-392-4147

Chris A. Simpson, Superintendent of Schools – Chad LeCrone, Assistant Superintendent

January 29, 2021

Dear Staff and Families:

This letter is to inform you that since Friday, January 22 there have been five (5) individuals in the district who tested positive for COVID-19: one staff member and two students from Richland County Middle School and one staff member and one student from Richland County High School. We have coordinated our efforts with local public health officials to promptly identify and monitor individuals who have had recent contact with the COVID-19 positive individuals in order to prevent further spread within our school and community. The health and safety of RCCU #1 students and staff is our highest priority, and we recognize the uncertainty and concern regarding the evolving coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. We are following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as the state and local health departments for best practices and procedures to protect everyone's health.

To prevent further spread of the disease, RCCU #1 is taking the following steps:

- Placing staff members and students who are identified as having prolonged close contact to the COVID-19 case in quarantine for 14 days. Close contacts will also receive a separate notification from local public health officials.
- Ongoing monitoring of students and staff for signs and symptoms of illness and evaluation of illness reports to promptly identify possible outbreaks.
- Conducting a deep clean and disinfection of the areas impacted by potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

We will continue to enforce safe practices to prevent, promptly identify, and respond to potential COVID cases, as follows:

- Students and staff who are ill with COVID-like symptoms will promptly be placed in a separate supervised area away from others until they can be sent home.
- Students are required to wear face coverings at all times, as previously directed and per school policy.
- Staff are required to wear face coverings at all times while in contact with children and other staff in the facility.
- We are continuously sanitizing high-touch surfaces including door handles, stair rails, sink faucets, etc.
- We are teaching students the importance of face coverings, social distancing, and proper handwashing:
 - Students are discouraged from sharing personal items, e.g., water bottles.
 - Students are learning new ways to greet each other without touching.
 - Students are reminded to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth, and to cover coughs and sneezes.

- Students will be taught to wash their hands frequently and properly, following CDC guidelines on handwashing.
- As we receive more information from the Department of Public Health and other entities, we will implement additional recommendations and guidelines.

As always, everyone should monitor their health and stay at home if they develop symptoms¹. Sick persons should contact their health care provider to determine if testing is needed. Anyone who develops severe symptoms² should seek medical care immediately. If your child has had close contact with a known case of COVID-19, keep the child at home and notify your primary healthcare provider, school/daycare, and your local health department.

We are committed to providing your child and our staff with a safe and healthy environment. Thank you for your understanding and ongoing cooperation with our COVID prevention policies and procedures as we work to help protect your children, your families, and our staff and their families. For any questions or concerns, please contact us at (618) 395-2324.

Sincerely,

Chris Simpson

¹ 1 Symptoms of COVID-19 include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

² 2 Severe symptoms of COVID-19 include: trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face.