



Colchester School District

Administrative Offices, 125 Laker Lane, PO Box 27, Colchester, Vermont 05446

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February 16, 2021

Dear CSD Community,

This letter is to inform you that an individual in the Colchester Middle School Arches Program has tested positive for COVID-19. **The district worked with the Vermont Department of Health to identify who came in close contact with the positive individual and have communicated with those parents/guardians and staff members directly.** Close contacts are defined as being within six feet for 15 minutes or longer.

The Arches Program will be learning remotely for the rest of this week but CMS will continue with their normal operating schedule. This means everyone will have their normal remote Wednesday schedule tomorrow and then **CMS will be open for in-person instruction on Thursday, February 18.** If there are any changes or updates to that plan, we will continue to communicate with you.

If you were *not* contacted by the district or the Health Department, you have not been identified as a close contact. If you still have concerns about exposure, you can contact the Health Department at (802) 863-7240. Any individual infected with COVID-19 will not return to school until they are healthy. Learn more about [getting tested in Vermont](#). We will continue to work with the Health Department to keep our community safe. Colchester Middle School is cleaned and disinfected per the Health Department's guidance.

We recognize that open communication is vital and we are committed to providing our community with accurate and up-to-date information, while also adhering to laws that prohibit the release of confidential information and protect the privacy of our students and staff. Thank you for understanding that due to medical privacy laws, we are not able to release the names of the individuals with COVID-19.

We recommend that everyone takes action to help limit the spread of COVID-19, even if your child is not experiencing symptoms. Also, be sure to answer the phone if the Health Department contacts you. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to District Nursing Supervisor and COVID-19 Coordinator, Deborah Deschamps, MSN/RN at deborah.deschamps@colchestersd.org.

Sincerely,

Colchester School District

Amy Minor
Superintendent
of Schools

George Trieb
Business & Operations
Manager

Carrie Lutz
Director of Student
Support Services

Gwendolyn Carmolli
Director of Curriculum
& Instruction

The most important things you can do:

- Make sure your child is wearing [a mask](#).
- Make sure your child is [washing their hands](#).
- Keep your child home if they are sick.
- Call your primary care provider if you or your child has symptoms [of COVID-19](#).

What is COVID-19?

A new coronavirus causes COVID-19, which is an illness that was discovered in 2019. Coronaviruses are a type of virus that are named for the crown-like spikes on their surface. There are many kinds of coronaviruses including some that cause respiratory illnesses, like the common cold. The specific symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 spreads mainly from having close contact with someone who has a COVID-19 infection, including between people who are near each other. The virus most commonly spreads during close contact through respiratory droplets and can sometimes spread through airborne transmission. When people with COVID-19 cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe they produce respiratory droplets. Another person can become infected if they inhale the droplets, or if droplets land in their nose or mouth. This virus can be spread by people without symptoms.

How can parents and guardians help prevent COVID-19 from spreading?

- If your child is sick, keep them home.
- Make sure members of your household wash their hands often using soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Make sure every member of your household covers their coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their elbow, and then washes their hands afterward.
- Wear a mask in public when you cannot stay 6 feet apart from other people.