

March 3, 2021

Dear Whitehall Community,

The district learned this afternoon, Thursday March 4, 2021 that an individual in the Whitehall Elementary School is Presumed-Positive for COVID-19. This individual was last in the building Tuesday March 2, 2021.

The district is working closely with Washington County Public Health Services to perform contact tracing. Soon, New York State Contact Tracers will be in the process of contacting those individuals that will need to quarantine. It will be important to answer your call in the event that you receive a call in the next 48 hours.

To ensure that contact tracers have ample time to contact those that are directly impacted by exposure, the Elementary building will be closed to in-person instruction tomorrow, March 5, 2021. This will also provide the district the opportunity to find coverage for staff that have been impacted by this exposure.

All elementary students will be learning online tomorrow. Students will still be expected to log-in or follow the plans previously set by their teachers for instruction tomorrow. ***The Junior/Senior high will remain open.***

Please understand that we know the importance of keeping our students in school, however, with the number of elementary school staff, students and bus drivers who are impacted by contact with the positive individual, we must pivot temporarily to a remote learning model at the elementary school.

I want to remind families that our school buildings continue to be a safe place, but this is again a unique situation in which a single, presumed-positive impacts many.

Please note that the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and other privacy laws restrict us from disclosing or confirming any personally identifiable information. We cannot identify anyone who has tested positive.

Please remember that our community must continue to work together to ensure overall public health. Following guidelines regarding masks, social gatherings and social distancing is important both inside and outside of school buildings. If your child shows any possible symptoms, please be certain to seek the advice of your family physician.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to keeping everyone safe.

Our Elementary Staff will be making preliminary contact in advance of the contact tracers call with all impacted individuals this afternoon.

Any additional questions, including information about testing procedures, can be directed to Washington County Public Health Services at 518-746-2400.

Sincerely,

Patrick Dee
Superintendent of Schools