

Evart Public Schools

October 15, 2020

HEALTH DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR EXCLUDING STUDENTS

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Families,

All local districts within the Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District (along with the Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District) are working in conjunction with Dr. Morse, the Medical Director for District Health Department 10 and the Central Michigan District Health Department to provide the safest school environments possible. In attempts to reduce COVID-19 exposures, students with any of the following symptoms (new/different/worse from baseline of any chronic illness) will be required to be excluded from school following the guidelines that will be explained later.

- Temperature 100.4 or above or signs of fever (chills/sweating)
- Sore Throat
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea, vomiting or abdominal pain
- New onset of severe headache

While all or any of these symptoms could be the result of pre-existing conditions or other illnesses, it is important that the risk of community spread of COVID is considered when excluding students from attending school. When counties are considered to be higher risk for community spread of COVID-19 according to the MI Safe Start Map (www.mistartmap.info) extra precautions are necessary. If a student comes to school and is sent home for any of the previously listed symptoms, the student should see a health care provider for further evaluation and/or be tested for COVID-19 (testing sites can be found at www.mi.gov/coronavirustest or by calling 211) if Osceola County is in a higher risk category for community spread. Unless the student was a close contact to someone with COVID-19, the student may return to school if they test negative for COVID-19 or their healthcare provider diagnoses them with another cause for their symptoms. **If the student tests positive for COVID-19 or is not able to provide another diagnosis from a healthcare provider, they must remain out of school for at least ten days since the symptoms first appeared (refer to flowchart).** Students may return after 10 days if symptoms have improved and no fever.

To assist you in understanding the process required to return to school, a flowchart has been included with this letter. Please look at the blue box. The fourth bullet is what determines if a student must stay out 10 days if they do not have a negative COVID test or if they have no alternate diagnosis from a healthcare provider. If Osceola County is at Risk Level of B-E according to the mistartmap site, then this requirement will be in place. If our county is in a Low or A Risk level, the students may return according to the guidelines found on the right side of the Flowchart. It would be unrealistic to check every day to determine our status. However, I do not want students to be excluded from school unless it is necessary. Therefore, we will determine on Thursday of each week the requirement that will be in place for the following week. Principals will send out information on Friday and it will also be available on our website. **Currently, Osceola County is in the C risk category for cases per million. This means that for the week of October 19th, if your child is sent home from school because of any of the symptoms previously listed, he/she is excluded from school for 10 days.** Please know that during in-person instruction exclusion (due to symptoms), your child will be provided with virtual learning opportunities.

I know this is very confusing. Other districts in our ISD are not doing exclusions on a weekly basis but are using the higher risk guideline until further notice so our plan differs from most other districts. Thank you for your assistance and understanding as we continue in our efforts to offer in-person learning through these challenging, but rewarding times.

Sincerely,

Shirley