

Update
From Your Superintendent
October 29, 2020

I know everyone continues to be more concerned and anxious as the number of cases of COVID-19 are increasing in Osceola County. We have been very fortunate that we have had only one student test positive for COVID and no staff members. I do want you to know that we have had both staff and students who have been tested but the tests results have all been negative. Because so many of the COVID symptoms are the same symptoms as you have for other illnesses, it is difficult to know if you might indeed be infected. Anytime we have a positive case in our district, students and staff will be quarantined following the health department guidelines. The extent of the quarantine will be determined by who was in direct contact with the person who has COVID. It could be just a few students, a whole classroom, a whole building, more than one building, or our entire district. These decisions will be made to ensure the health and safety of all our students and staff while maintaining the best educational opportunities that we can. Our health department will help us make the best decision.

STUDENTS SENT HOME FROM SCHOOL WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS
WEEK OF NOVEMBER 2- 6

Last week you received an update from me explaining the procedure we will use when students are sent home from school because they are ill. Evart Public Schools as well as all local districts within the Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District are following the Central Michigan District Health Department protocol. When counties are considered to be at higher risk for community spread of COVID-19, according to the MI Safe Start Map (www.mistartmap.info), extra precautions are necessary. Last week, Osceola County was in the C risk category for cases per million. As I explained last week, I will be checking each Thursday to see if Osceola County is in a high risk category. If a county is in risk categories B-E they are considered to be at high risk for community spread of COVID. **Today our county is in the E category. This means that for the week of November 2nd if your child is sent home from school because of any of the COVID symptoms, he/she is excluded from school for 10 days.** Please know that excluded students, due to symptoms, will be provided with virtual learning opportunities in order to stay on track with their peers as much as possible.

If your student is sent home and your child sees a medical provider and your child receives an alternate medical diagnosis, your child is able to return to school following the health department guidelines that are posted on the website. **In the event that this occurs after school hours, the school still must be notified before your child will be allowed to return the next day.** Although it is not expected that this situation will occur very often, we do not want students to have to stay home any longer than is necessary. **In order to be sure that your child can return the next day, you will need to call the Superintendent at 989-621-4249 if there is no one left at school to take your call.** If an alternate diagnosis or a negative COVID test can be reported during school hours, you should call the building your child attends and if no one answers, then call the Central Office at 231-734-5594. Central Office hours are 7:30-4:30. We are trying to do everything we can to keep our students in school.

Please continue to check the website at www.evartps.org. each week for this update, Click on the Covid-19 Notification Center Badge you will see under “Return to School Information” the Health Department Guidelines and the Flowchart for Handling Student Symptoms listed.

Thank you for your cooperation and your help in keeping all our students safe and healthy.

Shirley