



November 12, 2020

Dear Rivermont Community,

Yesterday we announced that one administrator had tested positive, and a teacher, while not testing positive, may have been exposed to a Covid-19 positive person. Since yesterday we've had an additional administrator test positive for the virus. The two cases are not connected. This person has been isolating and quarantining from his/her family in the home since 11/7/2020. This administrator's contact tracing has determined that no student, no teacher, or other administrator was exposed.

I had my weekly phone meeting with Scott County Health Deputy Director Amy Thoreson and the region's epidemiologist Dr. Katz yesterday. They recommended that as long as the school environment remains stable and we can meet staffing needs, we should keep kids in school. Unfortunately, with two administrators in quarantine and several other faculty and staff out for various health and personal reasons, we are short 16% of our full-time staff.

Safety is the biggest concern. As I've said in previous emails, it's good and productive to be afraid, but only up to the point that it drives rational and helpful actions. That said, our administrative team has made some decisions regarding students in grades 6-12. Here is the plan:

- 1) Day students in grades 9-12 will move to Red (distance learning) on Monday (11/16) and remain in RED until after the winter break, which ends January 3. This is to protect students, their families, our faculty, and our boarding students. Residential students will continue to attend classes in person unless directed otherwise by the school. This decision protects our teachers and residential students by maximizing social distancing and minimizing exposure to anyone traveling off-campus.
- 2) We're asking students in grades 6-8 to consider shifting to distance learning on Monday (11/16), as well, depending on individual family and student needs and remain in RED until after winter break ends on January 3. This approach allows us to meet the needs of families for whom childcare would be problematic but necessary. It also allows us to reduce class size, maximize distancing, and reduce exposure, thus keeping our teachers as safe as possible. Ms. Campbell will coordinate the effort to track the decisions of each family. Please note that we cannot allow parents to shift their preferences back and forth. Once parents decide, they will be encouraged to maintain their choices until we return from winter break. Exceptions will require compelling extenuating circumstances.

- 3) At this time, we do not intend to shift grades PS-5 away from yellow. Classes will continue as scheduled for that population. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and update you regularly.
- 4) Returning from Winter break is going to be tricky. We will likely require a minimum of one week of distance learning and a negative Covid test (or 14 full days of quarantining before reentry into in-person classes. Look for details in future updates.

Finally, I'd like to reiterate the critical importance of off-campus behaviors and how they contribute to or reduce all of our safety. I am deeply thankful for the class and the character of our students and families. We've had a few issues arise, and in every case, parents and students were forthcoming, honest, and demonstrated care for self and others. That's the way we do things when we have Lion's Pride!

Stay safe and be well.
Sincerely,
Max