



BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

45 Mount Rock Road

Newville, PA 17241-9466

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September 15, 2020

Dear Big Spring Families:

Out of an abundance of caution, a Big Spring Middle School student was sent home yesterday, Monday September 14th to their family after a screening of symptoms that appeared to be indicative of COVID-19. Today, the District learned that the student tested positive for COVID-19. After initial contact tracing, it was determined that due to the safety protocols that have been put in place with the District's tiered opening and social distancing, no other students were exposed.

District staff have been in direct contact with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and are coordinating all actions in accordance with their guidance and also protocols established in the District's *Staying Open Plan*. Specifically, the following steps have been and are being taken:

- Appropriate quarantining / isolation measures have taken place for the student to recover from the illness (*Staying Open Plan – Page 8*);
- The Pennsylvania Department of Health was notified after the student's evaluation yesterday and has been in close communication with the District from that point forward;
- The Pennsylvania Department of Health and their Epidemiology Team have assisted with initial risk assessment and contact tracing. Additional steps, as necessary, are being coordinated by the Department;
- Thorough cleaning / disinfecting has taken place in all spaces visited by the student, in addition to the heightened cleaning protocols in place for all school spaces (*Staying Open Plan – Page 10*);
- Building specific communication from Blackboard Connect and Aspen to families with students in the same building;
- District-wide posting of this communication for all families on the District website.

A document titled the "*Interim School Closure Decision Matrix*" was proactively created by the school district this summer to review such situations. The matrix was created in direct alignment with guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health. This matrix, located on Page 10 of the *Staying Open Plan* outlines that given the current level of community spread of COVID-19 (moderate) and the isolation of this one case, the school and District will remain open in Tier 2.

The District remains in close contact with the family and sends well wishes to our Bulldog. We are confident in the steps that have been taken to safeguard all of our students. Should additional updates be necessary from this specific case, we will certainly provide those as appropriate.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Fry, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools