



Penn-Trafford School District

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Effective, Efficient, Quality Education

October 13, 2020

Parents and Staff,

The Penn-Trafford School District has been notified that three students at the High School have tested positive for COVID-19. This is in addition to the two positive cases that we reported on Friday. This brings the total positive cases within a 14 day period to five. [The Department of Education's guidelines](#) gives school districts discretion to close schools based on the percentage of positive cases as it relates to the total number of staff and students in the building. It makes sense to consider a percentage model when there is such a disparity of students and staff in a small elementary school versus a large high school. The guidelines specifically state that if a school falls in the moderate level of community transmission and has cases greater than or equal to 5% of the total number of staff and students that schools are recommended to close for 14 days. The five cases at the high school fall well short of 5% so the high school will reopen as planned on Wednesday, October 14th. The school district will look at all cases individually and base closures on information received and the recommendations from the Department of Health and the Department of Education. It is important to consider if cases are community transmitted or school transmitted and if the positive COVID-19 students were in the building while they were contagious.

Contact tracing is currently being conducted at the High School. Only "close contacts" will be required to quarantine. The PA Department of Health defines a "close contact" as an individual who was within six feet of a positive case of COVID-19 for a duration of longer than fifteen consecutive minutes. High School parents and staff will be notified when contact tracing is complete.

We certainly understand if you are not comfortable sending your child to school under these circumstances. You always have the option to choose remote instruction during this time. Please contact your principal if you wish to exercise this option.

We will continue to closely monitor the cases within our district and follow all directions provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. We understand that parents want to know details of the positive COVID-19 individuals but we can not release confidential information due to privacy laws. Please note that while we have an obligation to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all members of our community, we also have an obligation to protect the privacy of individuals affected by this virus.

It is important for students and staff to administer the [PTSD Symptom Screening Tool](#) every day. If you are symptomatic or may have been in close contact with a positive case you need to stay home and contact the school nurse immediately. Your cooperation with sharing

Matthew F. Harris, D.Ed.
Superintendent

Scott A. Inglese
Assistant Superintendent

Brett N. Lago
Director of Business Affairs/Board Secretary

Gregory N. Karazzia
Director of Student Learning Supports

information with our nurses and reporting any positive cases of COVID-19 within your family or close contacts is very important.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matthew Harris
Superintendent