

September 13, 2020

Dear Staff, Parents, and Guardians,

This afternoon I became aware of a positive case for COVID-19 at Westbrook High School. While we are unable to identify the individual due to the confidential nature of the medical information, we can share the steps we will be taking to respond to this information.

What This Means for You and Your Child

If your child was in the same class cohort, or in close contact with the confirmed positive individual, you will be contacted by the school and/or Westbrook Health Department and your child will be advised to self-quarantine for 14 days since last class cohort or close contact with the confirmed positive individual, per Addendum 9 of the Connecticut State Department of Education School Reopening Plan. Close contact is defined by the CDC as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. The school and/or local health department will notify you if this action is necessary.

If your child is sick, stay home and contact your healthcare provider. We encourage you to continue social distancing, washing your hands, avoiding gatherings, and monitoring symptoms. If at any time, you or your child begin to develop symptoms of COVID-19 (such as cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell), please keep your child home from school and call your healthcare provider for next steps. It is recommended that you call ahead to your healthcare provider before going to the physician's office, clinic, urgent care, or emergency room so they can be prepared for your arrival. They may also refer you to a testing clinic. For the most up to date testing information, call 2-1-1 or visit the United Way of Connecticut website:

<https://uwc.211ct.org/coronavirus-covid-19-information/>

What This Means for Our School

The Westbrook Health Director, Zachary Faiella, has determined that the Westbrook High School facility needs to be closed for three days, September 14, 15, and 16. These three days will enable the school to be thoroughly cleaned and to conduct the necessary contact tracing. The students will participate in distance learning during this period. Pending further information on this investigation, students and staff who have not been identified as either being close contacts or in the same class cohort as the confirmed positive individual will be allowed to return to school this Thursday, September 17. Please note reopening may be subject to change if additional positive cases are identified.

The Westbrook Middle School will remain open due to the separate nature of that building and student traffic.

Children may worry about how COVID-19 may impact them, their family, and friends. Parents and guardians can help children navigate this experience in an honest and accurate way to help minimize anxiety or fear. The CDC created recommendations to assist with these conversations:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html>.

Thank you for your support in these efforts and your patience, flexibility, and understanding as we work together to promote the health and well-being of our community.

Sincerely,

Zachary Faiella
Westbrook Director of Health

Patricia Charles
Interim Superintendent