



Union County Educational Services Commission

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November 20, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This letter is to inform you that we received notification yesterday that several individuals at Lamberts Mill Academy, one of the schools located in our building at 1571 Lamberts Mill Road, tested positive for COVID-19.

We are coordinating closely with public health officials in the Westfield Regional Health Office and following CDC, State, and local guidance to assure the health and safety of our learning community.

It is important to note that there are currently no known instances of COVID-19 transmission between staff or students at 1571 Lamberts Mill Road. More importantly, contact tracing conducted with the individuals who tested positive indicated that there was no contact whatsoever with students or staff at Westlake School or Hillcrest Academy – South Campus.

As a precautionary measure, we have been advised by local public health officials to place Lamberts Mill Academy on fulltime remote learning until December 4, 2020. This will allow custodial staff to complete deep cleaning and sanitization of classrooms while we continue to work on contact tracing and supporting the individuals who are required to self-quarantine.

While the health officials did not deem it mandatory to impose restrictions on the other schools located at 1571 Lamberts Mill Road, I feel that it is in the best interest of the health and safety of our students and staff to also place Hillcrest Academy – South Campus and Westlake School on fulltime remote learning schedules from Monday, November 23 to Friday, December 4, 2020. You can expect to receive specific information regarding instructional and related service schedules from your child's teachers and therapists by Monday morning.

Again, I acknowledge the challenges associated with unanticipated shifts in school schedules and recognize that remote learning is not the optimal approach for many students. However, I feel that it is necessary to remain cautious and conservative in our decision-making given the increasing levels of COVID-19 in our local community.

We appreciate the level of concern regarding COVID-19. I assure you that we will continue to closely monitor the community health and notify you of any relevant updates regarding the anticipated return to hybrid instruction on Monday, December 7, 2020.

In the meantime, we encourage parents and students to continue following the safeguards promoted by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention promoted safeguards, such as:

- Staying home when you are sick;
- Washing hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds;
- Covering coughs and sneezes and properly disposing of tissues;
- Limiting close contact with people who are sick and not sharing food, drinks and utensils;
- Practicing social distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart);
- Wearing a face covering while in school; and
- Continuing to monitor your health for symptoms.

As always, we appreciate our community's flexibility and cooperation. You can assist us by remaining vigilant but sensible in your approach to dealing with this health concern.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Westlake School Administrators at (908) 232-4181 or my office at (908) 233-9317 x 271. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Kowalski

Michael J. Kowalski
Acting Superintendent

HELPFUL RESOURCES

a. NJDOH COVID-19 Information for Communities and the General Public:

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_community.shtml

b. Get the Facts about Coronavirus:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

c. Symptoms of COVID-19:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptomstesting/symptoms.html>

d. Testing:

<https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/testing>

e. How to Protect Yourself:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-gettingsick/prevention.html>

f. What to Do if You Are Sick:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/stepswhen-sick.html>