



Memo From: Sr. Margaret Mancuso and Sr. Marlene Pape

Memo To: All Parents and Guardians

Subject: Most recent COVID Case

Date: Wednesday May 5, 2021

First of all, we want to say once more how much we appreciate your ongoing efforts to promote the health and safety of students, faculty and staff at Nazareth Elementary. Your willingness to keep children home when they are sick (or have been exposed), quick response when children need to be sent home, and adherence to health department guidelines, all of these things have helped in our efforts to stay safe and well at school.

On Monday morning we became aware of the details of a positive COVID case in our kindergarten. We do not believe this case was related to in-school transmission. Out of an abundance of caution, the kindergarten was placed on remote learning through May 10. Mrs. Gotham and Ms. Baker are working remotely with the class via Zoom. The Monroe County Department of Health is doing the needed contact tracing. Per privacy guidelines, we can share no additional information.

We have asked the parents of these kindergarteners to watch for possible COVID 19 symptoms in their children. However, we want to make all parents aware of the positive test so that you increase your vigilance for symptoms in your own students. The symptoms we are watching for are the symptoms of many common childhood illnesses, including seasonal allergies. They include:

- ✓ fever over 100 degrees
- ✓ cough
- ✓ loss of taste or smell
- ✓ unusual fatigue
- ✓ sore throat
- ✓ shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- ✓ nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- ✓ muscle pains or body aches
- ✓ headaches
- ✓ nasal congestion or runny nose

(And please remember, any child can have allergies and COVID at the same time.) If your child has any of these symptoms, please contact your health care provider right away. Also, please call or send an email to inform the school nurse.

Your pediatrician will let you know what is needed, including whether a COVID test is necessary. By way of reminder, if your child has symptoms, you will need to provide either a negative COVID test or a note from the pediatrician explaining why a test is not needed before your child returns to school.

Fortunately most children have very mild cases when they do contract the virus. Even so, other children have developed serious complications of the illness, most notably Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome (PMIS). Also of concern is the fact that any infected child can transmit the virus to an unvaccinated adult for whom the infection can be life threatening. These are the reasons everyone is being so very cautious.

So what can parents do to prevent infection? First of all, neither parents nor schools can control every possible variable. But some things are within our control.

1. Be sure your child is wearing a properly fitted mask, one that covers the child's mouth and nose and stays up without constant adjustment. Fitting a mask well for a child is a challenge, but doing so can help prevent transmission of the virus.
2. Remind your children of the need to wear the masks properly and maintain distance in the classroom, on the bus and in the lunch room.
3. Encourage your children to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer properly.
4. Consider vaccinations to prevent COVID 19 for all eligible family members. The more people who are vaccinated the less virus will be circulating in the community and the less likely your child is to contract the infection.
5. And finally, but very important in terms of avoiding classroom closures and infection spread, please keep your child home if he or she has symptoms, until you can obtain and follow the directions from your pediatrician.

Be aware that although many restrictions are being lifted in our community, until recently the numbers of COVID cases in the area had actually been increasing. As a community, Monroe County's infection rate is twice that of New York State as a whole, and the number of infections in younger children is increasing. When classified, the current crop of infections are predominately of a variant which is known to be more infectious than the original strain of the virus. We are by no means out of danger, and we need to remain vigilant.

If you have any questions, please contact Sr. Marlene at 458-3786 or [mpape@nazarethschools.org](mailto:mpape@nazarethschools.org).