October 23, 2020

Dear Hopewell Parents/Guardians,

Today, the school district was notified by a parent that one of our elementary students is presumed to be positive for COVID-19 by the Department of Health. “Presumed positive” means that, even without a COVID test, an individual is showing COVID symptoms and has been exposed to an individual who tested positive for COVID. The student is in Kindergarten at Independence Elementary School. The student was last in our building on Tuesday, October 20, 2020. The classroom has already been cleaned and disinfected since the student was last in attendance.

Many parents have inquired about the term “close contact”. According to an epidemiologist from the Department of Health, it takes the body 2-3 days after exposure to reproduce the virus and begin shedding the virus to others. Therefore, DOH confirmed that the 2 day period before an individual is tested for COVID or the 2 day period before symptoms began is appropriate in identifying close contacts.

There have been recent changes by the CDC regarding their definition of “close contact”. The guidance is now a cumulative 15 minutes in a 24 hour period within six feet of a positive or presumed positive COVID case.

Also, the state has provided many medical facilities with rapid COVID test kits. Based on our current medical guidance regarding children and the rapid tests, we are not accepting the rapid test to return to school if a student is ill. We will still require a “return to school” excuse by a medical provider. If you have questions, please contact your child’s school nurse. With so much changing information, your school nurse is your best resource to provide you updated information regarding our children’s health and well-being.

With Viking PRIDE-

Dr. Michelle Miller
Superintendent