

11/17/2020 7:04 PM

Dear **P.S. 234 - QUEENS - Q234** at **30-15 29 STREET** Families:

The health and safety of our students and staff and everyone in the DOE family across the city is our top priority. We are committed to ensuring you have the information you need on COVID-19 as we continue to navigate this public health emergency together.

Today I am writing to inform you that two or more members of our school community have tested positive for COVID-19 within seven days of each other. We are quickly taking all appropriate action and following rigorous protocols developed by the NYC Test + Trace Corps, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC Health) and the New York City Department of Education (DOE).

Out of an abundance of caution, here is what will happen next to safeguard the health of our school community:

- Effective **11/18/2020**, the school building will close for an initial 24 hours. All students will transition to fully remote learning for this period.
- During this time, the NYC Test + Trace Corps and NYC Health will complete their investigation and the school will undergo additional cleaning and disinfecting.
- No staff will be permitted into the building except for those conducting cleaning and disinfecting. All other staff will work remotely.
- Anyone with a positive COVID-19 test will not return to the school and will be safely separated until they are no longer infectious. Please note that in order to protect the privacy of the individuals who have tested positive, we cannot share additional details about the case.
- All students and teachers present in classes with the individuals who tested positive are considered “close contacts,” and have been notified of the need to quarantine for 14 days since their last contact with the person who tested positive.
- The NYC Test + Trace Corps and NYC Health will identify any other close contacts of the individuals who tested positive, who will also be notified of the need to quarantine for 14 days.

Based on the status of the investigation, I will communicate with you by 6 p.m. each night about the status of opening the next morning for everyone who is not a close contact.

Additionally, we will share physical and mental health and wellness resources for you and your child. COVID-19 can be stressful for you and your loved ones. It is natural to feel overwhelmed, sad, anxious and afraid. We want to ensure you can access helpful resources for coping and reducing stress.

While New Yorkers have done an outstanding job fighting the virus, leading to extremely low infection rates citywide, COVID-19 is still active in our city, state and our country. There will be cases of COVID-19 this school year; we know this and all of our protocols have been in service of fighting this virus. Our job is to swiftly and effectively handle any cases that appear and be transparent every step of the way. That is what we are doing today.

We know a lot more than we did in March about how to protect each other from the virus, and it's critical that we continue to act to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our schools. All of us must remember to follow these important "Core Four" actions to prevent COVID-19 transmission:

- Stay home if sick: Monitor your and your child's health and stay home if you are sick or keep them home if they are sick, except for getting essential medical care (including COVID-19 testing) and other essential needs.
- Physical distancing: Stay at least 6 feet away from people who are not members of your household.
- Wear a face covering: Protect those around you. Wearing a face covering helps reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially if you are sick and don't have symptoms. For more information about face coverings, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and look for "FAQ About Face Coverings."
- Practice healthy hand hygiene: Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; clean frequently touched surfaces regularly; avoid touching your face with unwashed hands; and cover your cough or sneeze with your arm, not your hands.

We will continue to closely follow directions from public health experts and proactively update you on any measures we are taking.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions. For additional information on COVID-19, visit schools.nyc.gov/coronavirus or call 311. Finally, to ensure we can rapidly reach you via text and email, please set up a New York City Schools Account (NYCSA) as soon as possible by visiting schools.nyc.gov/nycsa.

Thank you for your cooperation. Health and safety will always come first in New York City public schools, no matter what.

Sincerely,

The Situation Room