

Dear Merrimack Families and District Staff~

I am writing today with information concerning a school district employee who has tested positive for COVID-19. This employee, whose name cannot be released due to privacy laws (HIPAA) regarding the disclosure of medical information, attended Merrimack High School's June 13th graduation as a volunteer. According to this individual's physician, and consistent with requirements for contact tracing established by the state of New Hampshire, **those who came within 6 feet of this individual, unmasked, for longer than 10 minutes**, should be notified of this diagnosis. By virtue of this individual's specific duties at graduation, we can confirm that this individual **did not** come into contact, in the manner described above, with any graduate or any family member of a graduate at any point during the ceremony. However, this individual did have contact, in the manner described above, with four high school staff members who attended graduation as volunteers. As required, these individuals have been contacted directly, confirming the positive diagnosis and their proximity to the COVID positive employee. I have spoken to the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services extensively today and they have assured me that based on their contact tracing procedures those individuals who had personal or professional contact with this individual have been communicated with appropriately, according to state procedures. I am advised that anyone who has not received a communication from NH DHHS or other health agency relative to this case is at no greater risk for contracting COVID-19 than they would otherwise be in the normal conduct of their daily life.

This development reinforces the reason for the school district's decision to require masks, social distancing, and all the other precautions put in place throughout the graduation ceremony for all attendees. As we contemplate our participation in the phases of reopening of our state, and our schools in the fall, this is a timely reminder that the virus remains active in our state and even within our community and that precautions must continue to be taken, and taken seriously, to limit contagion.

Below, please find a link to two state supported websites that provide current and factual information related to COVID-19 and related concerns. I urge you to consult with and rely on these and other verified sources of information related to this on-going health emergency.

www.nh.gov

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/covid-19-faq.pdf>

Thank you and stay well.

Mark McLaughlin

Superintendent