

# Dedham Middle School

## OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

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November 19, 2021

Dear parents, caregivers, and guardians,

In effort to ensure continuous communications and transparency as we work to keep all our students, faculty and staff safe, we are sending this letter to all Dedham Middle School families to inform you that a person in our 8th grade has tested positive for COVID-19.

Unless you've already spoken to an administrator or school nurse, your child was NOT a close contact of the affected school member.

The individual who tested positive was last present in our school on November 17, 2021, and received a positive test result on November 19, 2021.

We have already reached out to inform families whose students were at risk of exposure or in close contact, and to support the affected family as they navigate this stressful experience. Please continue to monitor your child for symptoms and keep your child home if he/she/they shows any symptoms or is not feeling well.

Please note, Dedham Public Schools are offering school-based close contacts the ability to Test & Stay, allowing students who may have been exposed but exhibit no symptoms and who test negative each morning, to remain in the classroom. Some students from the impacted team are participating in the Test and Stay program.

**Families are encouraged to visit our COVID News and Test & Stay webpages as a first stop to answering any questions or learning more about the process.** If, after visiting the webpages, you still have questions, please reach out to your school nurse or principal. Starting with the information and resources we've already gathered helps minimize calls and ensures that our nurses are able to remain focused on their first priority - the students under their care.

### What Is A Close Contact?

- When students are masked in a classroom setting, a "close contact" is defined as being within 3 feet of the COVID-19 positive individual while indoors for at least 15 minutes during a 24-hour period of the affected school member.
- In all other situations, close contacts are within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes in a 24-hour period.
- The infectious period is determined to be 2 days prior to symptom onset or positive test.

If you have not yet signed up for our school's routine COVID safety check program, [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more and sign up. We strongly encourage ALL families to provide consent for routine COVID-19 testing, even if their children are fully vaccinated.

If your child is eligible (5+ years old) but not yet fully vaccinated, we **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** you to complete this right away. Vaccines are free and readily available through the MA Vaccination Finder website.

Please remember, while we want all our families to be well-informed, it is important to remember that we must also protect the privacy of any individual and family impacted in these situations.

Thank you for your continued support,

Karen

**Dedham Public Schools**

**DEDHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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