

Dear Parents/Guardians,

You are probably reading in the newspaper or watching the news about other school districts having to go into soft-closure or sending large numbers of kids home due to numerous positive cases within their schools. I thought it would be good to update you on how our district is coping with positive cases of COVID within the schools.

Since we started school, we have had four cases where a confirmed positive case has been within our schools. We also had one case that occurred within an extracurricular activity, but it was prior to school starting. We are pleased that in each of these cases, we have not had anyone who had been identified as being at risk due to close contact with a confirmed test positive individual at school, being later identified as a confirmed test positive themselves. I believe this success is due to three actions that have been taken.

1. The students and staff wearing masks has been a very positive defense in spreading the virus.
2. The hybrid format has helped in keeping distance between individuals in the school, as well as reduced the number of students in a classroom that need to isolate if a case appears in the classroom.
3. The tremendous job parents are doing in monitoring their children for symptoms and keeping them home when they show symptoms or have possibly been exposed to others who have tested positive. Of course, the latter has caused our attendance to be lower than usual, but this was expected and why we wanted students to be able to continue their education at home during these absences so less work will be missed.

Case No.	School	Positive Case No.	Close Contact No. (Non-Family)	Close Contact No. that Tested Positive	Initial Investigation Complete	CDC Contact Tracing Completed
1	MHS (Extracurricular)	1	4	0	Yes	Yes
2	MHS	1	2	0	Yes	Yes
3	LWE	1	10*	0	Yes	Yes
4	MHS	1	1	0	Yes	Yes
5	MHS	1	Unknown**	N/A	Yes	No
6	MHS	1	Unknown***	N/A	Yes	No

\* Requested the entire class hybrid section to isolate.

\*\* Initial investigation indicates a very small number of individuals were in close contact.

\*\*\* New case today

Our efforts in taking precautionary measures to reduce the chances of spreading the virus within the schools has been very important in allowing us to keep our schools open and moving forward toward a more “normal” school environment. However, I ask that you have patience regarding bringing the hybrid groups A and B together. According to the Regional Director of the CDC we have been the model of success in keeping numbers of test positive cases to a minimum.

With current increases in our community and region we need to maintain what we are currently doing. Bringing more students into the building now could possibly be counterproductive and possibly cause us to go into full soft closure which is even less desirable. We will continue to monitor the impact of COVID in our area, consider the health and safety of our students and staff, and the educational impact of our students. Once it appears to be appropriate to move forward toward more face-to-face instruction, we will ask for your opinion before moving forward.

I know this has been hard on all the students, parents, and staff members. It seems that by the hour, day, or week things change so much the ability to plan is very difficult. Please understand the one thing that will not change is that my number one priority will always be the safety of all who enter our schools. I want to take a moment to thank the following:

- Our students for trying so hard to adapt to the current changes,
- Our parents for their diligence in making sure their child gets the support they need at home, and assuring they are healthy prior to sending them to school, and
- Our staff members who are trying to provide the best education possible in a period that makes it extremely difficult.

It will take all of us working together to make this year a success.

Sincerely,  
Gregory J. Bailey, PhD  
Superintendent  
Moscow School District #281