



Thunder Bay District
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TBDHU.COM

Saturday, November 7, 2020

To the St. Margaret School Community,

This letter is to advise you that the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) has been notified that two individuals associated with St. Margaret School have tested positive for COVID-19.

Upon receiving the first report late in the day yesterday, TBDHU immediately initiated an investigation to assess possible exposures in the school as well as in associated settings such as school transportation and the after school program. This work was expanded when the second report came in today. TBDHU is working closely with the school and with the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board (TBCDSB).

Through this work, public health is identifying those who would be considered "close contacts" (high-risk contacts) of either individual with COVID-19. Public health nurses are following up with each and every individual or family identified as a close contact and these individuals and families are being provided specific instructions and guidance. All individuals identified as close contacts will be isolating at home and will not be returning to school until advised that they can do so by public health.

Although there are two cases identified, both acquired the virus outside of the school setting. This is not an outbreak. At this time, there is no evidence that the virus has spread within the school setting. The public health investigation and follow-up is ongoing, including over the weekend. Public health will continue to monitor and assess for any evidence of spread and will take all necessary measures with the school and the school board to manage the situation as it unfolds.

As part of the investigation, public health nurses from TBDHU will also complete a site visit to the school and gather more detailed information to determine any others, including students, staff, and visitors, who may have been exposed to the virus. During this time, public health will also review the measures that the school has put in place to protect against COVID-19. St. Margaret school, like all schools, has implemented significant measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 in the school. Collectively these measures, along with individual measures that staff and students take such as daily screening, reduce the risk of COVID-19 entering the school and reduce the risk of transmission in the school.

As the investigation progresses any additional people identified as “close contacts” will be contacted directly by a public health nurse. As per standard practice, TBDHU also follows up on contacts outside the school setting as needed.

Anyone identified by public health as a close contact will be required to stay home and will not be permitted to return to the school setting until cleared by public health.

At this time, everyone else in the school setting **who is not specifically contacted by public health**, would not be considered at elevated risk. Note that you do not need to get tested unless you are specifically advised to do so by public health or instructed to do so through the [daily screening process](#) (TBDHU.com/safereturn_parents).

The school remains open for in-class instruction as per regular practice.

An [FAQ](#) directed to Parents and Caregivers that provides further information on the public health response to cases in a school setting is attached. This can also be found on the TBDHU website at TBDHU.com/safereturn_FAQ.

As usual, everyone should follow the general guidance to protect themselves and others against COVID-19, including screening yourself and your child every day for symptoms. Please see <https://www.tbdhu.com/stopgerms> and [TBDHU.com/safereturn_parents](https://www.tbdhu.com/safereturn_parents) for guidance and information.

Further information will be provided to the school community in the coming days.

Sincerely,

Janet DeMille, MD, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health
Thunder Bay District Health Unit

Encl.