



St. Mary's School for the Deaf is committed to providing equitable access to exemplary educational programs that prepare deaf students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who are productive members of society.

November 6, 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

The health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority. With that in mind, the purpose of this letter is to inform you that an individual at St. Mary's School for the Deaf, last present on Monday, November 2nd, has tested positive for COVID-19.

The Erie County Department of Health (DOH) has been notified and is taking further steps. The affected individual has been isolated and the DOH is identifying and contacting those individuals identified as close contacts by the DOH.

We are working with the health department and are taking all the recommended steps to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Steps we are implementing in cooperation with the DOH include the following:

- This individual and any individuals identified by the health department as being close contacts will be expected to follow the DOH's quarantine/isolation guidelines and will not return to school until they have completed the quarantine/isolation procedures for COVID-19 as directed by the Erie County Department of Health.
- Rest assured, that on a nightly basis our school buildings and buses are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

St. Mary's School for the Deaf cannot release any further details due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability & Accounting Act (HIPAA) requirements. Please continue to monitor your child for symptoms and have him/her stay home if they are sick. In addition, please contact your child's healthcare provider if they develop symptoms or if you have any additional questions or concerns. More information on the symptoms of COVID-19 can be found at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home> or on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

If you have questions regarding the information in this letter, please do not hesitate to either one of us, or SMSD's Safety Coordinator, Richard Szafrank (at (716) 834-7200 Ext. 169 or richards@smsdk12.org).

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joy Higgins in black ink.

Joy Higgins, Associate Principal
Phone: 716-834-7200 Ext. 352
joyh@smsdk12.org

Handwritten signature of Aimee Bell in blue ink.

Aimee Bell, Associate Principal
Phone: 716-834-7200 Ext. 273
aimeeb@smsdk12.org