



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 10, 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 Friday, November 6th, 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.

In working with the health department we 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:

- As a result of initial contact tracing efforts and Erie County Department of Health guidance, several MS/HS students will be directed to quarantine for 14 days. **In light of this decision, St. Mary's School for the Deaf will follow a full remote model of instruction for all students (all programs, birth through age 21) beginning Thursday, November 12th and through Friday, November 27th. All faculty and staff should work remotely on Thursday, November 12th and Friday, November 13th. Further guidance regarding staff reporting to school beyond this Friday will be released in the next two days.**
- 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 as directed by the Erie County Department of Health.

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,

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