

Dear Slate Valley Community Member,

On 1-15-21 we learned about an individual at Castleton Elementary School that has Coronavirus Disease. This individual was in attendance while contagious. Contact tracing is underway and anyone with possible exposure has been notified and sent home until a final determination on quarantine can be made. We expect to have contact tracing completed by the end of the day today. As always we are working closely with the Department of Health. We continue to advise our staff and students to stay home when sick. We recommend that you take action to help limit the spread of COVID-19, even if your child is not experiencing symptoms. This is especially important given that we know the virus is in our community.

The most important things you can do:

- Follow the Department of Health Guidance on Multi-household gatherings (updated 12-22)
- Make sure your child is wearing a mask and [washing their hands](#) frequently, if outside the home.
- Keep your child home if they are sick.
- Call your primary care provider if you or your child has [symptoms of COVID-19](#).

People who may have been exposed will be notified:

Anyone who was in [close contact](#) with the person who tested positive may have been exposed to the virus and will be asked to quarantine, which means staying home and away from other people for up to 14 days. Read more about what it means to quarantine [here](#).

If you are identified as someone who may have been exposed, someone from the Health Department will notify you and will provide information and guidance on quarantine and other recommendations. If the Health Department calls, make sure to answer the phone or call them back.

[Learn more about what happens when there is a case in a school.](#)

What is COVID-19?

A new coronavirus causes COVID-19, which is an illness that was discovered in 2019. Coronaviruses are a type of virus that are named for the crown-like spikes on their surface. There are many kinds of coronaviruses including some that

cause respiratory illnesses, like the common cold. The specific symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache

How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 spreads mainly from having close contact with someone who has a COVID-19 infection. The virus is thought to spread by droplets from person to person when they speak, cough, or sneeze. Droplets travel less than 6 feet. When droplets from another person get in your mouth or nose you can inhale into your lungs. This virus can be spread by people without symptoms.

We are working with the Health Department to keep our community safe.

- We continue to follow the Health Department's guidance for a [Strong and Healthy Start](#) and for [Childcare and Out-of-School-Time Care](#) .
- We clean and disinfect all schools per the Health Department guidance every day and night.
- Sick employees and children will not return to work until they are cleared per the VDH guidelines.
- [Learn about the Health Department's response when someone tests positive for COVID-19.](#)

Learn more about [getting tested in Vermont](#).

Thank you for understanding that, due to medical privacy laws, we are not able to release the names of the individuals with COVID-19. We will continue to communicate changes and updates with you. With your participation, we believe we can create a safe and fun experience for your children now and after the holiday break.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at bfarrell@svvvt.org.

Sincerely,

Brooke Olsen-Farrell

Superintendent