9145 Kennedy Avenue
Highland, IN 46322

Phone: (219) 924-7400
Fax: (219) 922-5637

To Our Highland Parents,

The school year is well underway, and now that students are back in our schools, we wanted to take this opportunity to share our COVID-19 procedures and guidelines.

The most common identified symptoms for COVID-19 include:
- Fever
- Cough (uncontrolled that causes difficulty breathing)
- Shortness of Breath
- Chills
- Muscle Pain
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- Vomiting/Diarrhea or abdominal pain
- Loss of Taste or Smell
- Runny Nose
- Congestion

Should a student or staff member present one or more of these symptoms, they will report to the nurse's office for an examination. We know these can also be symptoms of other illnesses, a body's reaction to something we ate (i.e., vomiting) or something we did (i.e., muscle pain). It is normal to have a cough or to sneeze; it is not normal for those to be continuous or to a marked degree.

The nurse will often send the student home for further monitoring for a 24-hour period. This is based on the Indiana Department of Health's guidelines. If parents believe the symptom(s) is the result of something else, they can provide a doctor's evaluation/note stating that the observed symptom(s) is related to other factors (not COVID-19). In that situation, the student may return to school AFTER 24 hours IF the symptom(s) have dissipated. If the student has a fever, he/she must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

In these cases an all school message will not be emailed to parents since a student has not been identified as COVID positive. The student only presented with one or more symptoms and we are sending them home to (1) see a doctor for an alternative diagnosis, or (2) keep them home for 10 days (being symptom free the last 24 hours). Students are encouraged to participate virtually while they are at home.

Should the parent/student elect to get a COVID test and the results are positive, the school will begin contact tracing starting the 48 hours before the student showed symptoms. The school will notify all close contacts as determined through contact tracing guidelines and procedures and send a school wide message so all are aware that there was a confirmed positive case. NOTE: We are required by law to maintain the privacy of our students, so all communication will be general. Both the positive tested student and those identified as close contacts are encouraged to participate virtually while they are home in isolation/quarantine.

If students choose to get a COVID test and provide these TWO documents, they will be allowed to return to in-person learning before the end of the 10 days:

      1) Negative COVID test, AND

      2) Physicians note with an alternative diagnosis.

      (This applies only if they are not determined to be close contacts.)

Should parents/students elect NOT to get a COVID test, then we have to keep them out of school for 10 days after which they may return IF the symptoms have subsided and there was no fever for the last 24 hours. Since the symptom is not confirmed by testing, we cannot call this a positive case, but will treat it as one as far as the student's removal from school.

We hope the description of our process and procedures helps to clarify questions concerning isolation, quarantine and messaging from the STOH. Under the Health Department's guidelines we follow, we know we will send students home who present a symptom(s) and do NOT have COVID. We do understand at times this will be inconvenient and frustrating but ultimately it is the only way we can protect all our students and staff and keep our schools open for in person learning.

We have all learned during the past months that things can change quickly and therefore, we will communicate any modifications to our plans and procedures in as timely a manner as possible. Thank you for working with us during these challenging times. It is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

STOH Administrative Team