

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 58 (NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN)

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Stephen McNiven, B.Ed., M.A., Superintendent of Schools Barbara Ross, C.P.A., C.G.A., Secretary Treasurer

P.O. Box 4100, 1550 Chapman Street, Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8, Phone: (250) 378-5161, Fax: (250) 378-6263

January 17, 2021

Dear Families,

RE: Merritt Secondary Community Member Tested Positive for COVID-19 School Exposure: Jan 6-8, 11, 12, 2021

A member of the Merritt Secondary community has tested positive for COVID-19. They are self-isolating at home with support from local public health teams.

We are supporting Interior Health Authority as they undertake contact tracing to determine if any other members of our Merritt Secondary community were in contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19, and if any additional steps are required. We are following the protocol established for these circumstances:

- The health authority is performing contact tracing;
- The health authority will determine if anyone in the Merritt Secondary community was in contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 while they were potentially infectious;
- The health authority will determine if anyone in the Merritt Secondary community is a close contact that is required to <u>self-isolate</u>.

Only the health authority can determine who is a close contact.

If you are contacted by Interior Health Authority, please follow their advice.

If you are not contacted by Interior Health Authority, it has been determined that your child is not at risk of developing COVID-19.

To ensure personal privacy rights are maintained, we will not be providing additional details.

The safety and well-being of our students, families and staff remains our highest priority. Please be reassured that Merritt Secondary will continue to implement the strict protocols and procedures we have in place so that children can continue to attend school as safely as possible.

Our regular processes of cleaning and sanitization continue diligently to ensure that our physical spaces are ready for all students and staff.

Students should continue to come to school while contact tracing is underway. As a reminder, please continue daily health checks to monitor your child for illness.

We will continue to work closely with Interior Health Authority to provide ongoing communication as required.

If you have questions or concerns about COVID-19, please call 811.

Sincerely,

Stephen McNiven

Superintendent of Schools

Student, staff or other person who has been in the school confirmed to be COVID-19 case Confirmed case interviewed by public health to determine how they were infected and who they were in close contact with while infectious If confirmed case was not infectious when they attended If confirmed case was infectious while they attended school OR it is determined that they were infected at school, the school will not be school, public health will inform the school contacted. administrator and: Coordinate with the school/district to Request class, Determine if there are any develop and implement a communications learning group and confirmed close contacts plan, including who should be notified, bus lists how and when Staff, parents and children will be notified if they were from the last exposure potentailly exposed If symptoms develop, seek testing Other staff, parents and children not potentially exposed may be notified at the discretion of the school If no symptoms medical officer develop, return to school after selfisolation period

Figure A: Public Health Actions in Response to Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in a School

Confirmed close contacts are determined based on the length of time of exposure and nature of the interaction. **Only public health can determine who is a close contact.**

^{*}This chart above is located in the "COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators" document - https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/covid-19-protocols-for-administrators.pdf