



DEER RIVER HIGH SCHOOL
101 First Avenue NE
PO Box 307
Deer River, MN 56636
Home of the Warriors

KING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
504 5th St. SE
PO Box 307
Deer River, MN 56636
King Pride

March 15, 2021

Deer River Families:

The purpose of this letter is to provide notification about a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 that impacted the high school setting today. A 12th grade student was determined to have had 13 close contacts with other high school students. There were also seven close contacts identified on the morning bus route. All of the close contacts have been notified and are now in preventative quarantine.

This is our second event at the high school in the past week. The local community COVID-19 case rates are trending a bit higher. It is difficult to assess whether these are relatively rare occurrences or a predictor of the challenge we may be facing more often with our return to daily in-person schedules. At this time 88% of our High School students have elected to return to daily instruction. This creates some classrooms and common areas that are challenging to maintain enough distancing to avoid close contact.

Our school staff will be actively reflecting on these past two events and determining some adjustments we can make to create additional spacing immediately. We will also need to resume actively screening students in their first period classes. At this time, we will be using a conversational approach to screen students with referrals to the health office as indicated. Parents and guardians are by far the most effective screeners. Please discuss your student's readiness each morning, even though high school students prefer more independence. This is critical to limit the quarantining of students. Although a necessary step in prevention, quarantine time hinders the educational process.

Our district is committed to continuing the Warrior Online option for any student who chooses to be more cautious or avoid participating in the safety protocols in place on campus. Many of our 18-year-old students are now eligible for vaccines. There is a possibility that eligibility may soon be extended to some who are 16-17 years old depending on their home address. We will notify families about any opportunities. We encourage you to research and consider in advance whether you would like to participate should the vaccines become more widely available soon. The Minnesota Department of Health has now transitioned toward encouraging students and athletes to test for COVID-19 on a regular basis. Free testing sites and home testing kits are available through this link:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/index.html>

We have entered a different phase of this pandemic with new challenges. Our staff is motivated to partner with you to provide the best possible educational outcome for each Deer River student.

Sincerely,