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News for Darien

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New Darien High, Holmes School COVID-19 Cases Announced Wednesday, Remote Learning for DHS Students Today

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Two people — one at Darien High School, the other at Holmes School — received positive test results for COVID-19, school district officials were informed on Wednesday.

Contact tracing resulted in six other people who were determined to have been in close enough contact, Superintendent Alan Addley said in an announcement late Wednesday afternoon to parents at the schools. Those six people were directed to keep themselves in quarantine, he said.

District Limits Sharing of Information

As a result of the positive tests, Darien High School classes are being taught remotely, online today, Thursday, a school official said in a separate announcement, according to an email forwarded to Darienite.com by a parent but not by the school district.

The school district has not notified the public about the remote learning day beyond announcements to parents, students and staff at the high school and Darienite.com has no information early Thursday morning about any similar action at Holmes School.

"We will continue to share information about confirmed cases of COVID-19 in order to be transparent and communicative, and to protect the health and safety of students and staff," Addley said in the in-school announcement. "Thank you for your ongoing collaborative efforts in helping to protect the well-being of our greater community."

COVID-19 Found in Two Tests

"On Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2020, the Darien Public Schools District COVID Response Team was notified that two members of our school community tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), in unrelated cases," Addley said in the email, sent to Darienite.com at 4:58 p.m., Wednesday.

"One case was reported at Darien High School, with the individual's last day at school being [Friday] Oct. 16," Addley wrote. "The other case reported at Holmes School, with the individual's last day at school being [Tuesday] Oct. 20."

(At the bottom of this article are the full texts of Addley's Wednesday announcement and the Darien High School remote learning day announcement on Thursday morning.)

A History of District Foot-Dragging on Announcements

Addley had also, separately announced another positive COVID-19 test at Darien High School last week in an email sent by Alicia Casucci, the district's school nursing director. That announcement was never sent to Darienite.com until it was published elsewhere (apparently not as the result of district officials notifying any news organization) and only after Darienite.com demanded a copy from Addley with a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

Addley told Darienite.com on Friday that those announcements will be sent by the school district and individual principals to Darienite.com in the future. Darienite.com has repeatedly asked Addley and repeatedly asked previous superintendents to send such announcements, sometimes with FOIA demands.

Full Texts of Two Announcements

Addley's announcement late Wednesday afternoon:

Dear Parents and Community Members:

On Wednesday, October 21, 2020, the Darien Public Schools District COVID Response Team was notified that two members of our school community tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), in unrelated cases. One case was reported at Darien High School, with the individual's last day at school being October 16,

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2020. The other case reported at Holmes School, with the individual's last day at school being October 20, 2020. The affected individuals have been instructed to remain home in self-isolation for ten (10) days and have been provided with additional instructions to follow prior to returning to school. Family members have also been instructed to self-quarantine and get tested.

The details of each case have been reviewed with the Darien Health Department and our District Medical Advisor. Contact tracing has been completed and it has been determined six (6) individuals are considered close contacts and require quarantine. All individuals have been notified and given further instructions regarding quarantine and further evaluation.

Your continued cooperation with monitoring for symptoms and practicing preventative measures is greatly appreciated. We will continue to share information about confirmed cases of COVID-19 in order to be transparent and communicative, and to protect the health and safety of students and staff.

Thank you for your ongoing collaborative efforts in helping to protect the well-being of our greater community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Alan Addley

Superintendent



Alicia Casucci, APRN, CPNP

Director of Nursing Services

This email, from Paul Ribeiro, Darien High School assistant principal, apparently to parents, students and staff at the school, was forwarded by a parent of a high school student:

Good morning,

As a follow up from the Superintendent's message making today an e-learning day, below is the link to today's e-learning schedule. Today is an H day. Thank you.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/14IIUvTKIVGvxrCvm7F_Mm43Pe7W9aToEijZ3eU0TWio/edit

[Editor's note: The link above leads to a Web page consisting of the image below.]