Schools Nursing Director Issues Rules Restricting Attendance for Students, Teachers at Risk of Spreading COVID-19

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In one of two messages Tuesday night to parents and staff of Darien Public Schools, restrictions on attendance or even visiting schools were announced by the district's Nursing Director, Alicia Casucci.

"This communication provides you with travel and school exclusion guidelines for students, staff, families and visitors," Casucci wrote in the March 10 message. "[T]he following district policies will take effect immediately for parents, students and staff."

The new rules say:

Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms ("fever, coughing, shortness of breath") is not allowed to be in school or

at school events until a physician clears them to do so.

Anyone within 6 feet, for a prolonged period, of someone with COVID-19, or anyone in contact with "secretions" (such as being coughed on) from someone with COVID-19 is also not allowed in school or at school events.

Anyone with no symptoms but who was in the area of someone with COVID-19 but not in close contact can be in school unless symptoms begin. People who fall in this category are urged to get the advice of a medical professional and should "self monitor" for 14 days and seek isolation if symptoms begin.

The letter gives a detailed explanation of what's recommended in "self monitoring" as well as what is considered "close contact."

Why Anti-Coronavirus Measures Are Being Implemented: A Reminder

- Health experts have said that slowing the spread of the virus can save lives by avoiding or shortening times when hospitals and medical providers become overwhelmed by more cases than can be adequately treated (see the “What May Happen” section of this Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web page).

Full Text of Nursing Director's Announcement

Here's the full text of the announcement (boldface words and weblinks are in the original document):

March 10, 2020

Dear Families and Staff,

This communication provides you with travel and school exclusion guidelines for students, staff, families and visitors.

Public health authorities have indicated that community transmission of COVID-19 is likely occurring now in Connecticut. While there have not been any positive cases of Coronavirus detected in our community, we are making arrangements to continue operating should that occur.

As new reports of individuals exposed to or infected with COVID-19 are identified in our area, and keeping in mind the continued effort to maintain a healthy school environment, the following district policies will take effect immediately for parents, students and staff. In consultation with public health officials, we will be adhering to the following guidelines:

***CLOSE CONTACT** is defined as:
a) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 infected individual for a prolonged period of time, or close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 infected individual
– or –
b) having direct contact with infectious secretions from a COVID-19 infected individual (e.g., being coughed on)

****SELF MONITOR means:**
Individuals should monitor themselves for fever by taking their temperatures twice a day and remain alert for cough or difficulty breathing. If they feel feverish or develop measured fever, cough, or difficulty breathing during the self-monitoring period, they should self-isolate, limit contact with others, and seek advice by telephone from a healthcare provider or their local health department to determine whether medical evaluation is needed.

The "CDC does not recommend testing, symptom monitoring or special management for people exposed to asymptomatic people with potential exposures to SARS-CoV-2 (such as in a household), i.e., "contacts of contacts;" these people are not considered exposed to SARS-CoV-2." (CDC)

EXCLUSION DUE TO ILLNESS AND TRAVEL

The district's policies for exclusion due to illness and travel have not changed. They are as follows:

STUDENT AND STAFF EXCLUSION FOR ILLNESS:

Students and staff should not come to school with the following

? Fever greater than 100.4 degrees F (without the use of fever reducing medications)

? Excessive, uncontrolled cough, with or without fever

? Difficulty breathing or unexplained shortness of breath

? Reddened throat, with or without fever

? Vomiting and diarrhea, with or without fever

? Copious nasal discharge, with or without fever

? Excessive fatigue, body aches, ill appearance, with or without fever

TRAVEL: With February break behind us, April break on the horizon, and many parents who travel within and outside of the United States for work, it is necessary to address concerns around domestic and foreign travel. The district has been, and will continue to, monitor and follow the CDC, U.S. Department of State and the Connecticut Department of Public Health guidance for students and staff returning to school and work after travel. **Consistent with the CDC's** recommendations**, the district is requiring a 14-day voluntary**

quarantine period for all travelers from CDC Level 3 countries**, currently these countries are China, Iran, Italy and South Korea, before they return to any Darien school campus.** The district will continue to follow all travel advisories and update quarantine recommendations as they evolve per the CDC guidelines. **We strongly encourage you to consider all future travel and greatly appreciate your fidelity upon returning to Darien by adhering to all travel advisories.** This is for the health and safety of all.

Sincerely,

[*signed*] *Alicia Casucci*
Alicia Casucci, APRN, CPNP-PC, NCSN
Director of Nursing Services Darien Public Schools