



March 4, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Today, March 4, 2021, the district was notified of a Virtual Academy staff member who has been identified as a confirmed case with the COVID virus. Berrien County Health Department and Berrien Springs Public Schools have completed the contact tracing process. As a result of the contact tracing, one staff member at the Virtual Academy, one district staff member, and one Virtual Academy student will be required to quarantine. There is no evidence of transmission of the virus at the Virtual Academy.

In addition, our school district was notified by the Berrien County Health Department that Berrien Springs High School has been identified as having a COVID outbreak in the building. The outbreak at the high school was the result of two sets of two students at the high school who recently tested positive for COVID. This information will be posted on the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website with other state-wide school districts that have experienced an outbreak. The information is also posted on the Berrien County Health Department's website and on the Berrien RESA COVID dashboard. This is the second COVID outbreak in the school district. There have been COVID outbreaks that have occurred in other Berrien County school districts since the start of the school year.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services defines a school related COVID outbreak as the following:

*In accordance with the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists' **outbreak definition**, educational institutions (i.e., grades K-12 and institutions of higher education) that have been found by their local health department to have two (2) or more COVID-19 cases who may have shared exposure on school grounds and are from different households are included. Case counts for school-related outbreaks include those associated with before and after school programs (e.g., school-sponsored sports). When applicable, outbreak reporting also includes cases originating from on-campus and off-campus student housing.*

The coordination and communication between our school district and the Berrien County Health Department is an ongoing testimony to the significant amount of planning and preparation our staff and BCHD staff have continued to invest in response to COVID-19 within our school district. We will continue to work closely with the health department to provide them with accurate information needed to assist in future COVID-19 case investigations and the contact tracing process. The school district appreciates the collaborative support and guidance from our county health department.

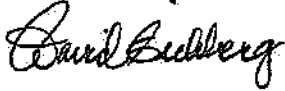
The district continues to implement the safety protocols and procedural guidelines recommended by the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, the Berrien County Health Department and the Berrien Springs Return to School Roadmap. A copy of our district's Roadmap is available on the school district's website at www.homeoftheshamrocks.org.

Our school district will continue to follow all recommended and necessary precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at all times. Please be reminded of the importance of remaining vigilant in practicing the following safety protocols to mitigate the spread of all illness:

- Wearing a facial covering
- Practicing frequent hand washing
- Remaining home when sick
- Parents are reminded to screen students daily for potential symptoms of illness before sending them to school
- Staff are reminded to complete the daily health screener before reporting to school

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to support healthy practices at home and in your personal activities as we respond to these events in our school district and community. I continue to be very proud of the way our staff and students demonstrate flexibility and cooperation during this very challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Eichberg".

David Eichberg, Superintendent