

Ruidoso Municipal Schools

200 Horton Circle - Ruidoso, NM 88345
Phone: (575) 630-7000 - Fax: (575) 257-4150

Dr. George Bickert
Superintendent



Clinton Taylor
Director of Finance

Ruidoso High School
Shari John, Principal
(575) 630-7906

Ruidoso Middle School
Cecily Hooker, Principal
(575) 630-7801

White Mountain Elementary
Becca Ferguson, Principal
(575) 258-6300

Sierra Vista Primary
Angela Romero, Principal
(575) 258-6400

Director of Special Education
Dr. Melvina Torres
(575) 630-7015

Athletics/Activities Director
Kief Johnson
(575) 630-7912

Bilingual Coordinator
Mayra Lucero
(575) 258-6300

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RMSD Staff and Members of the Ruidoso Schools Community:

We have received several questions with regard to District processes and protocols relating to positive Covid-19 cases and contacts. I hope the following will address those questions. However, please reach out to your child's school if you have any additional questions.

Each identified positive Covid-19 case is handled by the District's Rapid Response Team (RRT). The RRT communicates directly with the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) and receives guidance and directives from the medical professionals at DOH.

Each positive test result that comes to the District prompts an investigative contact tracing requirement and multiple reporting requirements by the RRT. Based on information shared collaboratively with the DOH, the agency determines an identified incubation period, a mandatory quarantine period, and any additional actions including closure. Identifying the incubation period defines the window of time to identify "close contacts" for notification and reporting purposes. All individuals identified as "close contacts" are provided notification from the District as soon as possible. Based on the number of "close contacts" and the totality of information available, DOH provides a response plan for the District to follow.

Recently, a District Pre-K staff member returned a positive Covid-19 test result. In following the direction of the DOH, the District identified 38 individuals as "close contacts." Based on this number, DOH required the quarantine of Pre-K students and staff as well as the closure of the Pre-K class wing for the time of the defined quarantine period. In this case, Pre-K classes may resume on Thursday, October 29, 2020. As no other wings of the Sierra Vista Primary (SVP) building (Region IX Head Start, Kinder, 1st Grade, or 2nd Grade) were connected to the case, or identified as "close contacts", DOH did not direct additional closures of other areas of SVP.

The District has received information about positive test results from other students, staff, and family members throughout this school year. Each case involves the same process of the RRT following pre-established protocols, conducting detailed contact tracing, reporting information back to multiple state agencies and following the response plan provided by the DOH.

By design, the hybrid model, currently in place at Sierra Vista Primary and White Mountain Elementary, which only allows cohorts of students to be on-campus 2-days

per week with certain exceptions, significantly reduces the number of “close contacts” in a positive case scenario.

Moving forward the District will continue to follow the process highlighted above in handling each and every positive Covid-19 test result along with the prescribed timelines and requirements determined by the DOH as far as quarantines and/or closures are concerned.

The most powerful tool that all of us have in slowing the spread of this virus is to continue following the public health and safety recommendations of wearing a mask, washing hands often, limiting unnecessary travel and avoiding mass gatherings. I hope this information is helpful. Again, if you have additional questions, please contact your student’s school directly.

Sincerely,



Dr. George Bickert
Superintendent