

Orange East Supervisory Union

Serving the towns of Bradford, Corinth, Groton, Newbury, Ryegate,
Thetford, Topsham, and Wells River

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Dear BMU School Community:

Good morning, contact tracing was completed late last evening. At this point, anyone considered a close contact has been notified. If you were not notified, that is good news, you are not considered a close contact by the Vermont Department of Health. If you have concerns about your own health, we urge you to speak with your primary care physician. Those who are considered close contacts need to quarantine for 14 days, or seven days of quarantine followed by a negative PCR test. No one else is required to be tested or to quarantine. If you are interested in testing, there are a number of pop-ups throughout the State. Testing is free at these sites: https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing/where-get-tested?fbclid=IwAR1LYOI-qfRK_2wvMfxKfVoBbshOHkq0czOH5d0kvs2Aqep8pC880XpaIwk

Little Rivers is also offering testing, as are a number of local physicians. Please note that getting a PCR COVID test is the most reliable.

We have made the decision for Blue Mountain Union's pre-k program to change to remote learning through December 9th. On December 10th BMU's pre-k program will return to in-person learning. All other grade levels at BMU will return to in-person learning on Monday, November 30th. This decision was made due to the number of students and staff in pre-k who need to quarantine due to possible exposure. We feel it is important to be transparent about our rationale and decision-making process. We know that some will agree and some will disagree with the choice, but we are making the best decision we can with the reality we are faced with. It is our goal to re-open school for in person instruction, there is value in our students being together.

We are asking you all to remain vigilant in monitoring yourselves for COVID symptoms. If you have symptoms, we urge you to reach out to your physician to discuss being tested for COVID. If there are more cases we want to know, and we ask that you keep us informed. Our ability to work together for the greater good of all who live within these towns, is more important than ever before.

We do not believe that our two positive cases are connected or that the transmission occurred between individuals in the BMU building. As more test results are returned and people complete quarantine, we will have more information. We are tracking this matter closely and working with the Vermont Department of Health.

In the meantime, remember to always wear a mask and keep your distance from others. Continue to stress these ideas with your children when they are in and out of school. As hard as it is during this time of year, please limit your interactions to only those in your own household—as the Governor has stated. Our ability to keep our schools open depends on the collective actions of all of us. We appreciate the flexibility and hard-work of all the students, teachers, staff, and parents as we work together to get through this.

Many thanks,

Emilie Knisley
Superintendent of Schools