

Dear WSNS Parents and Guardians,

We were notified at the end of the day today of a presumptive positive case of COVID-19 in Somerville, which involves the spouse of a teacher at the West Somerville Neighborhood School. Both the teacher and their child, who is a student at the West, are asymptomatic, but will be self-quarantining in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MPDH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations. The Somerville Board of Health was informed of a second presumptive positive case in a male Somerville resident. The City will share more information on this case as it becomes available.

As recommended by the city's Department of Health and Human Services, the Somerville Department of Public Works (DPW) will be conducting a deep cleaning of the entire school this evening, utilizing new equipment that allows them to thoroughly clean and sanitize the building overnight. As an additional precaution, the West Somerville Neighborhood School will be closed tomorrow for any additional work that may be needed. Classes will resume as scheduled on Friday, March 13. As per Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines, the day will be added at the end of the school calendar year.

The City and Schools have activated our joint Emergency Response Team, which has been working in coordination with MA DPH and other State, regional, and community partners on a rapidly evolving response to COVID-19. The CDC offers the following guidance for how COVID-19 spreads: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>. The schools and City also announced new [social distancing measures](#) posted to the city website at www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus. The measures modify and in some cases suspend certain City- and School- sponsored or permitted events, sports, and meeting activities effective immediately, as an additional precaution. We would also like to remind you of important steps you can take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay home when you are sick, and especially if you are coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Practice social distancing. Examples of social distancing include not attending large events like concerts or sports games, avoiding shaking hands or hugging, remaining at least six feet away from others and especially anyone who is coughing or sneezing, and allowing employees to work from home or teleconference.
- Wash your hands often, using soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer until soap and water are available.
- Cough/sneeze into a tissue. Dispose of used tissues immediately into a trash can. If you don't have a tissue, cough/sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that you touch frequently such as doorknobs, railings, sink handles, phones, and computer keyboards.

Thank you.

Mary E. Skipper, Superintendent