

NEWS RELEASE

February 24, 2021

District Addresses Media Requests for School-Specific Covid-19 Information

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District has received a number of inquiries today (Wednesday, February 24) regarding the release of school-specific Covid-19 information, namely a list of schools where an individual connected to that school has developed Covid-19.

“To be clear, while we are aware Eastern Health has released some school-related information to local media, the District is not in a position to provide additional detail,” said Tony Stack, CEO/Director of Education. “This is information collected by Public Health. It is not routinely shared with the District. We have certainly expressed concern about the release of any information that could potentially impact on the privacy of students, staff, or families within a school community, but this is not the District’s information to withhold or disclose. However, we requested that Eastern Health allow us time to inform our stakeholders.”

In the [Newfoundland and Labrador Public Health Guidance to K-12 Schools](#) the following direction was provided:

If a staff person or student in a school is confirmed by public health as positive for COVID-19, public health will work with school administration to determine what actions should be taken, including if any staff or students who have been in contact with that person need to self-isolate, and if other staff and students’ families should be notified. . . Public Health will provide direction if there are concerns regarding a case in school. Schools should not provide notification to staff or students’ families if a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, unless directed to by public health.”

It should be noted that just because an individual connected to a school has developed Covid-19 does not mean it was transmitted through the school or that the individual was contagious while in the school environment.

“We have seen how the Mount Pearl Senior High community has been the target of some very negative and hurtful public discourse in the past two weeks,” Mr. Stack said. “I do not wish to see a repeat of this for any of our other school communities. I would encourage media outlets and the public to recognize the trauma these students, staff and families have suffered, and are suffering, and offer only kindness, respect, and support as they navigate these difficult days.”

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