

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 3, 2020

Schools and Transportation impacted by positive cases
EES, HPS, and riders of Bus Route 2 notified Wednesday afternoon

Eagle, CO – Eagle County Schools announced today that Edwards Elementary School (EES) and Homestake Peak School (HPS) notified their school communities about a positive case of COVID-19 at their schools yesterday afternoon. In both cases, contact tracing determined that those in close contact with the positive cases should quarantine. Those needing to quarantine were contacted directly and provided with quarantine orders from Public Health.

For EES, a staff member tested positive and was last in school on Tuesday, December 1. Four EES staff members, including the principal, will quarantine through December 15.

At HPS, a student tested positive and was last in school on Monday, November 30. Seventeen students will quarantine. However, three staff members and twenty-one students in an 8th-grade pod will transition to remote learning for the length of the quarantine. The quarantine runs through December 14, with all students and staff returning to school on December 15.

In addition to the school cases and quarantine orders, a positive case in the transportation department has resulted in three transportation staff members in quarantine. Consequently, bus route 2 has been canceled until December 14. Bus Route 2 serves Red Sandstone Elementary School, Battle Mountain High School, and Homestake Peak School. Families of students who ride this route were notified via telephone calls and through the SmartTag app.

Public Health notifies the school district of a positive case with ties to the schools, either as a student or staff member. Working collaboratively, Public Health and the district pull relevant schedules and seating charts, and begin interviewing the positive case and those who might have been in close contact with them while infectious. A careful list is developed of those students or staff who need to quarantine to contain the potential spread. Those needing to quarantine are called and emailed promptly, including in the evenings and over weekends.

Quarantine orders protect the broader population from those who may be contagious, asymptomatic, or most likely to develop symptoms. The layers of protection at schools, mainly wearing face coverings and social distancing, help significantly reduce the risk of contracting the virus. So far, only a few cases have developed from those directed to quarantine.

As positive cases mount, the challenge of keeping schools operational in-person also climbs. Staff members may be out due to a positive case in their household, their child being on

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quarantine, or because they are positive or in quarantine themselves. Systemwide staff absences can strain the district's ability to remain open. Anticipate more cohort, grade level, and school level transitions to remote learning in the Orange High Risk phase.