

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 1, 2020

Recap of incidents at area schools just before and during holiday break

Additional quarantine orders issued going into Thanksgiving break

Eagle, CO – Eagle County Schools announced that since Monday, November 16, 11 incidents connected to area schools resulted in COVID-19 notifications going home to families the week before and the week of the Thanksgiving break. Among all 7,000-ish students and staff, the incidents involving Avon Elementary School, Battle Mountain High School, Berry Creek Middle School, Brush Creek Elementary School, Eagle Valley Elementary School, Gypsum Elementary School, Gypsum Creek Middle School, and Homestake Peak School resulted in a combination of 241 students and 21 staff being issued quarantine orders, with an additional 80 learning remotely. Additionally, three staff members at Avon Elementary School started a precautionary quarantine the week before break, meaning they had exposure to a positive case outside of school.

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, 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.

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 quarantine, or because they are positive or on 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. Hopefully, the new restrictions will help turn the tide of virus transmission to lower levels.