

Dear Southern Elementary Families:

We are facing unprecedented times, but I want you to know that my commitment to be open and honest with our entire Southern Elementary School community remains strong.

I am writing this afternoon to make you aware that one of the employees at our school was diagnosed this morning with COVID-19. First, let me reassure you that while this person is still not feeling well, they are able to be at home while they recuperate.

We are working side-by-side with the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department to respond appropriately based on factual information. This employee last interacted with other adults on campus on Thursday, March 19, and at that time, they were not exhibiting any symptoms. No students have been in the building since the last day of school on Friday, March 13.

The Lexington-Fayette County Health Department has conducted a thorough investigation and has concluded that the Southern Elementary School community is at no higher risk than anyone else in the general public. Although there are no concerns for our students or families, we are notifying you because I want you to be able to trust that I will always be transparent with you.

Please know we are following health department recommendations and will continue to follow all cleaning precautions in our building. The health, safety and well-being of our community is our top priority.

For everyone's piece of mind, we have made the decision to postpone the distribution of our "NTI materials" until 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday April 5 and 4 to 6 p.m. on Monday April 6. Health Department officials said we could proceed as planned this week without a problem, BUT by waiting beyond the 14-day window for everyone, there should be nothing to worry anyone. During these uncertain times, we are all feeling a heightened sense of anxiety. I want to be sure that as we head in to our two weeks of instruction at home people can focus solely on teaching and learning.

For more information about the spread of the coronavirus, please continue to refer to the CDC and Kentucky Department for Public Health guidelines. Please continue to monitor your own health and to call the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department COVID-19 Hotline at (859) 899-2222 should you have questions about coronavirus.

I will keep you updated if anything changes. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me by email leighann.mclaughlin@fayette.kyschools.us .

The Southern Elem building itself is closed to the public and to our staff. The only exception is our outstanding cafeteria staff will continue passing out meals for children.

Please ask your neighbors or families of Southern to check this message. We are also sending out a letter via US Mail this week. Our school is special place filled with students, staff and families who take care of one another and that will carry us through this difficult time.

Respectfully,
Ms. McLaughlin
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