



Dear Community Families,

As you are probably aware, a St. Louis woman in her 20s who recently returned from Italy tested positive Saturday for COVID-19 (coronavirus). She has not been hospitalized, and is in self-quarantine at home. Her younger sister is a student at Villa Duchesne, and there is understandable concern within the independent school community, both for the family in question and anyone else they may have come into contact with over the past few days.

Community School does send graduates to Villa, and there are currently three Villa students who have younger siblings who attend Community. I spoke today with all three of their families, who will keep their Community School children home tomorrow from school. It is important to note that there are no indications that these families have contracted COVID-19. However, out of an abundance of caution it seems reasonable to keep them out of school until we can get recommendations from the public health authorities. We have reached out to the St. Louis County Department of Public Health, and will base our policies and actions on their guidance.

Additionally, a few John Burroughs School students may have been exposed. Fortunately, those students have no connection to Community School, and their likelihood of actually contracting COVID-19 appears to be quite low.

Please be aware that any students, teachers, staff or parents who may have come into contact with a person testing positive for COVID-19 should contact the school prior to coming onto campus.

I would like to take a moment to thank our Community families. Our three Villa families were whole-heartedly in support of keeping their children home tomorrow, and, like the rest of us, firmly believe that the safety of children here at school is of paramount importance. I am reminded so vividly that we are, indeed, a community that watches out for each other, and puts the welfare of others first.

Please remember that children are surprisingly perceptive. Whenever possible we recommend that you discuss topics such as this out of the hearing of very young children, and do your best to stay calm and factual when discussing it with them.

I will continue to update you as more information becomes available. Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions, and keep our friends in your thoughts and prayers.

-Bob