

COVID mostly contained at local schools

September 26, 2021



Even as COVID-19 surges in Del Norte County, local schools have done a good job keeping the case count low.

Del Norte Public Schools Superintendent Jeff Harris reported 20 cases have been reported in county schools since the pandemic began. With more than 4,000 students and staff across 11 campuses, the cases have been contained thanks to mitigation efforts practiced on campus.

In Del Norte County, all students are required to wear face masks indoors, classrooms are set up to provide social distancing and students are encouraged to wash hands frequently.

The district has reported cases at eight of the 11 campuses, with only Margaret Keating Elementary, Mountain Elementary and Pine Grove Elementary having no confirmed cases.

Bess Maxwell Elementary has had two students test positive, Joe Hamilton had one staff member test positive, Mary Peacock Elementary had two students test positive, Redwood Elementary had two students

and two staff members test positive and Smith River Elementary has had the most cases in the district with three students and two staff members testing positive.

At the middle school level, Crescent Elk has had two students test positive. Del Norte High School has also had two students test positive while Sunset High has had one staff member with COVID. One staff member at the district office also tested positive.

Harris said with COVID surging like it is, more cases will likely be found. He said the key to keeping all campuses safe is to keep children home who are sick.

“It is more important than ever that parents and guardians screen their children for COVID-like symptoms daily,” Harris said in his weekly update. “If your child exhibits symptoms and you test your child, please keep them home until you have received the test results. If negative, keep them home until symptoms clear without medication for 24 hours or until they are cleared by a physician. If positive, please follow the isolation instructions provided to you by public health. Unfortunately, we have had students who have exhibited COVID symptoms and have come back to school before their test results were in. Tests came back positive, and we have had to quarantine dozens of students, which would have been easily avoided if the students being tested had simply stayed home.”

Harris said district families can visit dnusd.org/familyresources to see a COVID checklist the district created.

While sporting events are continuing, Harris urged spectators to stay away from the games. He said the district is working hard to livestream most games so spectators can watch without putting anyone at risk.

“Due to the continuing high number of positive COVID cases in our county, we ask that you support our students by watching from the best seat in the house - your own living room,” Harris said. “When available, our home games will be live streaming on the Del Norte High Facebook page.”