



Morris Hills High School



520 West Main Street • Rockaway, NJ • 07866-3799
Main: 973-664-2309 • School Counseling: 973-664-2329

Todd M. Toriello,
Ed.D.
Principal
973-664-2301

Robert Merle, Jr.
Assistant Principal
Discipline Grades 09&11
973-664-2303

Gene Melvin
Assistant Principal
Discipline Grades 10&12
973-664-2357

Emily Barkocy
Assistant Principal
Student Attendance
973-664-2305

Robert Haraka
Athletic Director
973-664-2307

**Yesenia Rivera -
Carney**
School Counseling
Supervisor
973-664-2313

October 30, 2020

Dear Morris Hills High School Community,

We hope this correspondence finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe. The purpose of this letter is to share with you an update with regard to our school closure that took place beginning on Wednesday, October 28, 2020. As you know, this week, Morris Hills High School was informed by local health officials that a member of the Morris Hills High School community had tested positive for COVID-19. The high school immediately coordinated closely with public health officials and followed all CDC, state, and local Health Department guidelines in order to ensure the health and safety of our community.

As our local health officials began conducting contact tracing, it was discovered that another member of the Morris Hills High School community had also tested positive for COVID-19, resulting in Morris Hills High School having two cases of COVID-19 within a 14 day period. As per state guidelines, schools must close for 14 days if *"2 or more cases are identified within 14 days that occur across multiple classrooms and a clear connection between cases or to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 cannot be easily identified (outbreak involving multiple cohorts.)"*

We are disappointed to announce that the local health officials from Mt. Olive, Randolph, and Rockaway Township, the departments who oversee the cases connected to our high school, have informed us that Morris Hills High School will need to extend its school closure through Tuesday, November 10, 2020. Furthermore, all athletic practices, contests, and extracurricular activities are paused through November 10th as well.

Morris Hills High School will resume with its in-person hybrid learning model and all athletic and extracurricular activities beginning on Wednesday, November 11, 2020. We will provide an update to the Morris Hills High School community next week with regard to the rescheduling of athletic competitions and extracurricular activities. Also, we will share information with you about the rescheduling of the Driver's Education exam. Finally, please be advised that the SATs scheduled at Morris Hills High School for November 7, 2020 have been canceled.

Please know that this decision was not made lightly. In partnership with our local health officials, our situation was escalated to the Regional Epidemiologist serving the northwest region of New Jersey, Ms. Sandhya Clark. After reviewing our situation, Ms. Clark brought our case to Barbara Carothers, Public Health Representative for the Communicable Disease Service for the State of New Jersey, for even higher review and scrutiny. After careful consideration and analysis, the recommendation to extend the closure to Morris Hills High School was decided.

Our goal has always been to provide a safe environment for our students and staff. Thank you for your ongoing patience, support, and flexibility as we continue to navigate the changing conditions of this pandemic. Let's continue to work together in being vigilant in our approaches to this public health crisis. Please remain safe and enjoy the weekend.

Sincerely,

James J. Jencarelli, Superintendent of Schools

Todd M. Toriello, Ed.D, Principal of Morris Hills High School