



MORTON
UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

Oct. 25, 2020

Fifth and sixth grades at Morton elementary school will quarantine

All fifth- and sixth-graders at Lettie Brown Elementary School in Morton will go into immediate quarantine after two sixth-grade students and two sixth-grade staff members tested positive for COVID-19.

The sixth-grade stay-at-home order is consistent with Centers for Disease Control guidelines and mandatory. The decision regarding fifth grade is voluntary, made out of an abundance of caution after the two fifth-grade teachers at Brown may have been exposed due to close contact with a positive case.

The fifth and sixth grades at Lettie Brown are relatively self-contained, which is why the quarantine affects those classes only. Sixth-graders will be in remote learning for two weeks. They will return on Monday, Nov. 9. Administrators will make a call regarding the length of quarantine for fifth grade after the teachers involved get their COVID test results. The families will be notified at that time.

In addition, 12 fourth-graders at Brown will be quarantined following a student positive in that class. Students and staff at Morton Academy, which enrolls 16 boys who reside at Guardian Angel home through a contract with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, also will be quarantined for two weeks after a staff positive there.

School officials will continue to monitor the situation at Brown and are prepared to act, as needed, as they should this situation arise at any District 709 school. Meantime, we ask families to pay close attention to any symptoms their children may experience. Those who are more comfortable keeping all of their children home have the district's support, and accommodations will be made for them.

Keep in mind that the quarantine extends to more than just school attendance. Our healthy quarantine guidelines can be viewed [here](#).

Please know, as well, that we at Morton School District 709 are doing our best to manage this situation as safely and as responsibly as possible. While all of our schools have been getting deeper-than-usual cleaning this year, all classrooms, bathrooms, staff lunch rooms, the office, lockers and other areas at Lettie Brown and at Morton Academy will be immediately and thoroughly sanitized.

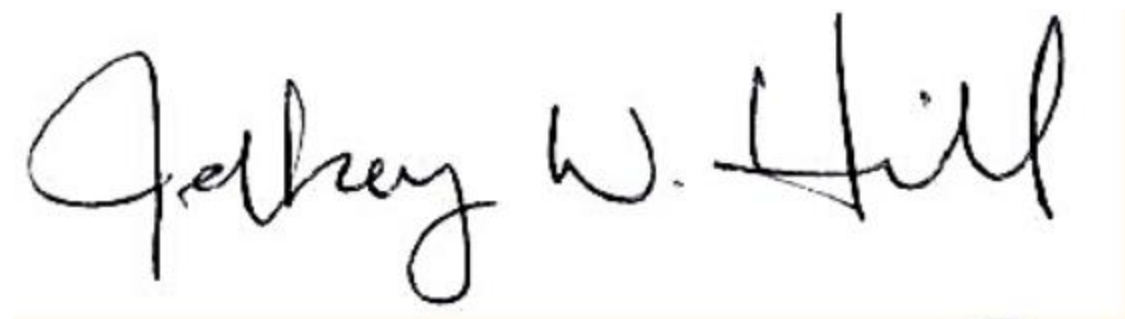
We knew going into this 2020-21 school year that there would be ups and downs regarding the pandemic, and have exhaustively planned for as many contingencies as we could imagine. Good news doesn't get as much attention, but more than a quarter of the way into this school year, we have been heartened by how healthy our student body and staff have been overall in an environment of predominantly full-time, in-person classroom instruction.

Indeed, even with these latest cases, out of an enrollment of nearly 3,100 students, some 2,900 of whom are present inside our buildings at any given time, currently our student positives are at 5. Our rates of infection and quarantine, meanwhile, remain much lower than the community at large.

As always, we thank everyone for their patience and understanding during this challenging time. Please continue to take precautions in protecting your own health and that of others through repeated hand washing, face covering and physical distancing.

We will have no further public comment at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey W. Hill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Jeffrey" is written with a large, looped 'J'. The middle initial "W." is written with a simple 'W' followed by a period. The last name "Hill" is written with a large, looped 'H' and a trailing 'l'.

Jeffrey W. Hill, Ed.D

Superintendent

Morton Community Unit School District 709