



Ministry of Education
Communications Section
P. O. Box N-3913/14
Nassau, The Bahamas

Press Release

RE: RESPONSE TO COVID19 CASES

April 19, 2021

The Ministry of Education informs the public, based on information received from the Surveillance Unit of the Ministry of Health, that suspected cases of Covid19 were reported in the following New Providence schools within the past week.

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| * H.O. Nash Junior High School | * L. W. Young Junior High School |
| * Sadie Curtis Primary School | * Carlton Francis Primary School |
| * C. R. Walker Senior High School | * T.G. Glover Primary School |
| * Garvin Tynes Primary School | |

The Surveillance Unit also advised that five individuals (students and staff members) tested positive in New Providence over the past two weeks. The Ministry of Health has not reported the existence of any cluster of cases in the public education system nor of any connection between the positive cases identified, which are in different institutions. As is the practice, following assessments of each situation, several students and staff members have been requested to enter a 14-day quarantine period, having been considered significant contacts of COVID-19 positive individuals. The Ministry of Education has not received any report from the Ministry of Health of a five-year-old student in the public education system having tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.

The Ministry of Education advises that with the consideration for the introduction of the hybrid model of instructional delivery, It recognized that there was a heightened probability that an increase in COVID-19 cases in the wider community would be reflected in our academic institutions. Consequently, the Ministry collaborated with the Ministry of Health and Department

of Environmental Health Services to develop a protocol manual to mitigate, as far as practicable, any possible adverse outcome. Over the past several weeks, the Ministry of Health has reported an increase in COVID-19 positive cases throughout the country, particularly in New Providence.

Prior to students and staff members returning to face-to-face instruction, the Ministry of Education published a ‘Strategic Plan for the Safe Reopening of Schools,’ in consultation with the Ministry of Health. This plan outlines the procedures to be followed to maintain a healthy environment and mitigate the spread of Covid19, including measures to be executed in the event the virus presents on a campus. The Ministry of Education has followed all of the health protocols as directed by the Ministry of Health and the Department of Environmental Health Services, documented in that plan.

As we move forward, the Ministry of Education encourages all teachers, parents, school-based staff members and students to rigorously observe the health protocols, such as social distancing, mask-wearing and hand sanitization, which have been put in place to protect all.

The Ministry of Education is committed to, and takes very seriously, the “Safety First, Education Always” paradigm which governs its mandate to deliver access to quality education for all its students. Under no circumstances, therefore, will it permit the health and safety of its Administrators, Teachers, Staff and Students to be compromised.

Thus, it continues to work in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Department of Environmental Health Services, to ensure that all our students and staff members, throughout the public education sector, remain healthy and safe.
