

*Southern Plains Arise Academy*  
ALC◇Bridges◇PALS  
1200 N Park Street◇Fairmont, MN 56031  
Phone: (507) 235-4099◇Fax: (507) 238-2361

September 17, 2020

Dear Families, Students, and Staff:

We were notified by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) of a lab confirmed case of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in a member of the Arise Academy community with exposure dates of September 14 and 15.

We have worked with the MDH to identify those who had close contact with this individual, and we have communicated with all individuals who are deemed to be a close contact as defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the MDH. The risk of exposure for other individuals present in the building on these dates is no greater than the risk of contracting the virus in the general community.

To be clear, if a person was identified as a close contact with this individual, they have been notified. However, if you were not identified to have close contact with the positive case, you can and should still monitor yourself for symptoms of illness as you have been thus far. If you are a student or a staff member in the Arise building, you do not need to stay home unless symptoms develop. If symptoms develop, stay home and consult with your physician to determine if medical evaluation is needed.

We understand that this may create unease in our community. We have taken action to clean and sanitize the facility and are working closely with MDH to monitor the situation. We are asking all members of our community to continue to minimize the spread of illness by taking the following actions:

- Protect yourself and others by wearing a face covering when it is hard to stay 6 feet from people; washing your hands with soap and water, covering your cough and sneeze, and avoiding touching your face with unwashed hands.
- If you are sick, stay home from child care and other activities.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home. Keep enough food, regular prescription drugs, and other necessities on hand in case you need to stay home and cannot go out easily.
- Frequently clean all commonly touched surfaces (e.g., telephones, doorknobs, countertops, etc.).

If symptoms develop, stay home and consult with your physician to determine if medical evaluation is needed. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, MDH recommends:

1. Stay home for at least 10 days, and for 24 hours with no fever and improvement of other symptoms. Your fever should be gone for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication.
2. Use the CDC website on how to Care for yourself at Home with COVID-19.
3. If your household contacts were exposed to you while you had symptoms, they should try to stay home as much as possible for 14 days.

Resources that you may find valuable can be found here:

- MDH Coronavirus: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>
- MDH If You Are Sick: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html>
- CDC Coronavirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

This is a challenging time and I know many of you may be feeling stress or anxiety. Because of this stress and anxiety, I feel that it is only fair to be as transparent as I can be within the confines of privacy laws. This is why, even though the individual in question was likely not in any, or limited, contact with those who work or attend school at Arise Academy, I felt it necessary to inform everyone of a positive COVID-19 case. If you have any questions or concerns, you are more than welcome to contact me at 507-238-4099 or [stephanie.schmitz@southernplainsedcoop.org](mailto:stephanie.schmitz@southernplainsedcoop.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Schmitz', with a small accent mark above the 'i'.

Stephanie Schmitz