



October 6th, 2020

Good afternoon. According to the Rutherford Board of Health, there has been one additional positive COVID-19 case reported today, bringing the total case numbers in Rutherford since March to 260.

Yesterday, the Rutherford Board of Education received information that an individual at Union Middle School tested positive for COVID-19. After consulting with local and county boards of health, the Board of Education made the decision to have all Union Middle School teachers and students operate remotely until Tuesday, October 20th. This action is being taken out of an abundance of caution and will enable the Rutherford Board of Health to closely monitor all possible contacts through contact tracing while mitigating any potential spread within the school setting.

The Rutherford School District is coordinating closely with public health officials and following CDC, state, and local health department guidance in order to ensure the health and safety of our community. Those who were in close contact with the individual have already been notified and cleaning and disinfecting of all exposed areas has been completed.

At last night's Board of Ed meeting, Superintendent Hurley assured the public that well thought out procedures have been put in place to minimize potential spread of COVID throughout the district. I am confident that the Rutherford Board of Education and Board of Health will continue to take all precautions available in order to keep our Borough safe, just as they have since the pandemic began. Both groups have operated with the calm and informed decisiveness needed in any extreme circumstance. They have already proven their dedication to the health and safety of our residents and will no doubt continue to do so.

Additionally, the Rutherford Recreation Department is made aware of any COVID positive case that may affect its sports programs. The Rec Department spent the summer creating a COVID mitigation strategy for youth sports including pods with a maximum of 10 participants, limiting close contact by concentrating on skills & drills and requiring wellness checks of all players prior to participation, which was implemented when fall programming began at the end of September. Out of a further abundance of caution, all Rutherford Recreation youth programs as well Rutherford Junior Football & Cheer programs will be temporarily suspended until the Board of Health is able to fully conduct contact tracing.

Parks and playgrounds will remain open however we are discouraging large groups from gathering. We strongly encourage residents to exercise extreme caution when allowing their children to play in groups and public spaces. All permits for block parties will be suspended until further notice as well.

The Rutherford Public Library remains open. The Borough is in contact with the Library Board of Trustees and staff who are ensuring patrons utilize the library safely and responsibly.

Please reinforce with your children the importance of safe behavior upon leaving school. When they are in school, they are in a controlled environment with mandatory masks and distancing. Our Board of Health employees have observed a troubling amount of contradictory behavior amongst groups of school aged children around town.

We appreciate our community's support and cooperation. You can assist us by remaining vigilant but sensible in your approach to dealing with this health concern.

Sincerely,
Councilman
Mark Goldsack