

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health unit has determined that at least one of the two positive individuals acquired their infection in the school, hence the outbreak declaration.

“The term ‘outbreak’ is used provincially by public health units when they believe there is evidence that at least one person could have reasonably acquired their infection within the school,” states a notice from school principal Jonathan Di Ianni.

“We appreciate that this news may be concerning for our students, staff and parents. We want to assure you that we continue to work closely with the HKPR health unit to respond to this issue, and we continue to follow all public health and provincial guidelines to protect student and staff safety.”

For privacy reasons, the board is not disclosing any information about the individuals who have tested positive. The individuals are remaining at home until advised otherwise by the health unit.

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The staff and students from three classroom cohorts have been sent notifications from the health unit identifying them as close contacts and giving them specific instructions with respect to mandatory quarantine and testing recommendations.

The school is currently closed to in-person learning along with all other schools in Ontario as a result of the provincial shutdown and stay-at-home orders, which were recently extended to May 20. Staff at St. Thomas Aquinas are making provisions for the continued in-person support for a small number of students with special education needs who require additional support that cannot be accommodated through remote learning.

The school continues to implement enhanced daily pandemic cleaning protocols, and regular disinfection of the school with the electro-static sprayer. All students and staff are asked to continue to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.