



Building Partnerships for Tomorrow

Union County Educational Services Commission

45 Cardinal Drive
Westfield, New Jersey 07090
Phone: 908-233-9317
Fax: 908-233-7432
Transportation Fax: 908-518-1669

Michael J. Kowalski
Acting Superintendent
mkowalski@ucesc.org

Eric Larson
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary
elarson@ucesc.org

Lorraine Vitiello
Transportation Coordinator
lvitiello@ucesc.org

December 21, 2020

Dear Work Readiness Academy School Parents, Family Members and Staff:

This letter is to inform you that an individual at Work Readiness Academy was identified as having a presumptively positive case of COVID-19 over the weekend.

We are coordinating closely with health officials in the Westfield Regional Health Office and following CDC, State, and local guidance to assure the health and safety of our learning community.

Contact tracing was completed and the individuals identified as having been in close contact (Within 6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes or more) on December 15-16, 2020 with the individual who is presumptively positive have been notified of recommended follow-up actions.

While one incident of COVID-19 does not require temporary closure of the Work Readiness Academy, several staff members have been required to self-quarantine due to close contact with the individual. I am concerned about the potential impact of these absences on our ability to ensure safe, consistent and effective learning environments for students.

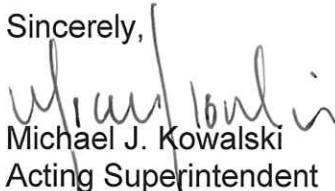
For this reason, and in consideration of increased positivity and transmission rates in our area, I have made the difficult decision in consultation with the UCESC Board of Directors to shift the Work Readiness Academy to full-time remote learning effective Tuesday, December 22, 2020.

I understand this announcement is disappointing and apologize for the last-minute notification. However, I am confident the decision represents the best interests of health, safety and wellness for students and staff alike during these exceptionally challenging and stressful times.

Please know that we remain fully committed to providing traditional classroom-based instruction. Our teachers, therapists, paraprofessionals, and support staff have put forth extraordinary effort since September and I commend each for their continued dedication. While we need to remain flexible and open to unanticipated change, I am hopeful that we will resume hybrid instruction as originally planned on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 and will update you in coming weeks.

Please contact Mr. Bornstein at (908) 233-9317 x 1026 or my office at (908) 233-9317 x 1001 if you have any questions or concerns.

I thank you for your understanding and wish you a safe, healthy and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Kowalski
Acting Superintendent