



PLATTSBURGH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Good afternoon Parents, Faculty, and Staff:

Though you've already received another message today (which dealt specifically with updates to the Reopening Plan for students who are failing class(es)), there are other COVID updates which warrant another communication. These are summarized below:

Increasing Clinton County Infection Rates

The data released by the Clinton County Health Department in recent days is discouraging. As was widely-projected, the changing seasons (whether because of more indoor activities, Halloween festivities, etc.) are accompanied by increasing COVID rates. Around the State, certain regions have entered 'cluster-protocol'. The parameters for such (which involve Green, Yellow, Orange, and Red designations) involve multi-day average infection rates which are still quite a bit higher than those in our County, but the current trend is nonetheless worrisome. To that end, we will continue to encourage everyone (students, faculty, staff, parents) to stay vigilant about safe COVID practices (masks, hand hygiene, avoiding gatherings, etc.).

Interscholastic Athletics

Through the hard work of many, some version of a Fall sports season was held, and now is about to end. Players, coaches and parents endured difficult conditions (playing with masks, self-transport to games, limited spectators), but accomplished something quite remarkable, given the circumstances. From the onset, the focus of this interscholastic sports seasons was on activity, normalcy, and emotional well-being. Hopefully this Fall season accomplished these goals. Technically, per State rules, the Winter sports season may begin on November 30, but we await updated guidance from the Governor and from NYSPHSAA. The Indoor Track season appears improbable (league-wide) due to lack of venue. Boys' Swim and Bowling are therefore the only sports for which we are currently organizing teams, and these might begin on November 30th (again, pending further update from the State). Basketball, Hockey, and Cheer remain classified by the State as 'high risk' activities and, based on the experience of Football, Volleyball and Cheer from the Fall, these sports' seasons would appear unlikely to occur. We will, naturally, communicate any updated directives and information from the State as soon as these are released.

Franklin County & FEH BOCES

As you've likely learned from local media, most districts in the region to our West have preemptively moved to remote instruction through January 4th. Though infection rates are higher in Franklin County than in Clinton County, the general trends are, we worry, similar. The concept of a planned, preemptive move to remote instruction in our District and County has been discussed, but no such decision has yet been made. This approach, which we've termed a 'holiday circuit-breaker', will be further discussed early next week (with the CCHD, amongst area Superintendents, and with our Reopening Planning Committee). Again, though schools in Franklin County have systemically moved to remote instruction, no such decision has yet been made for our district or our County.

MISSION

Our mission is to educate each student of the Plattsburgh City School District by creating challenging, supportive, and interactive learning that advances intellectual, physical, social, and cultural development.

Updates to Reopening Plan

A number of updates to our district's reopening plan have been approved. Most of these are narrow in their impact, but one significant change involves the requirement that students who are failing class(es) join the hybrid mode of instruction. A detailed, stand-alone message about this has been sent to parents.

Technology

I believe that there have been tremendous improvement in the district's use of (and everyone's comfort with) technology, but I acknowledge that continued improvement is necessary. If your family is experiencing technology issues (and these could involve device/hardware, internet connectivity, software/applications, or any other element), I urge you to contact your child's Principal, or to use the technology help portal on our website (<http://www.plattscsd.org/departments/technology-integration/>) to seek assistance. If circumstances require that we switch to the fully-remote mode of delivery, it will be even more critical that technology issues be resolved.

Final thoughts

That we are still operating in our hybrid mode in mid-November is beyond my best hopes for our district. However, there is widespread concern that the approaching holidays could accelerate the virus' spread in our region, and cause the school closures which we've all worked so hard to avoid. As you contemplate your Thanksgiving plans, I urge you to consider the advice of the public health community and work to avoid virus exposure. I ask this for your own health, for the health of our community, and in the interest of preserving some in-person instruction for our students.

Best wishes for continued health,



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