



Rochester Area School District

Jane W. Bovalino, Superintendent of Schools

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November 18, 2020

Dear RASD Community,

On Monday, November 16, 2020, Beaver County Superintendents participated in a Zoom conference call with representatives from Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and Department of Health to discuss the increase in COVID cases across the county.

As you may recall, in late summer, PDE released a three-tier system using county transmission rates as a guide for local decision-making on instructional models for the return to school. All three models are connected to county health-based metrics. The three-tiered model is based on incident rate and percent positivity within the county. Beaver County has been in the moderate level since August meaning an incident rate of less than 100 but greater than 10 per 100,000 residents, and/or percent positivity of less than 10% but greater than 5%. Those metrics are published weekly.

This past week, the county's incident rate rose from 75.9 to 162.1 and our positivity rate rose from 4.5% to 8.3%. The 162.1 incident rate pushes the county into a **substantial** designation. The recommended instructional model in the substantial is a Full Virtual Learning Model. The PDE recommends two consecutive weeks within a designation before considering a change in the instructional model. According to our conference call, it is anticipated that the county will fall within the substantial designation for a second consecutive week after Friday.

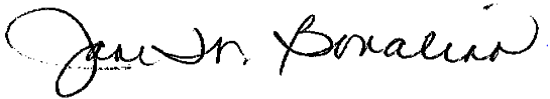
In addition to the countywide data, our school district has experienced a rise in the number of positive cases and a rise in the number of persons, specifically staff members, who are quarantined as a result of being exposed to a person who tested positive. As of this time, we have three elementary staff members and one K-12 staff member who have tested positive for the coronavirus. In addition, we currently have five more staff members in our quarantine protocol. Although none of our students have tested positive as of today, we do have 25 students in our quarantine protocol.

Therefore, the elementary school must transition to a full virtual environment immediately. Effective Thursday, November 19, all Rochester Elementary children will be virtual. Our middle school and high school students will transition after the Thanksgiving break. Starting Tuesday, December 1, 2020, the MS and HS will also be virtual. Students will move to a synchronous instructional program outside of the school. Students will be expected to join their classes via Google Meets daily. Additional information will be forthcoming from your child's principal and teachers. There will be no change for Rochester Cyber Academy students. The move to remote learning will continue until at least Friday, December 11, 2020. School meals will be available for pickup and distribution during this time. Information about this service will follow on our website and from our food service department.

Rochester Area School District ... where great things are happening!

We will continue to monitor health data and will communicate the plan beyond December 11, 2020 at a future time. Our goal, as always, is to have your children present in school. Please know, we do not take this decision lightly. We understand the burden that is placed upon the community to find childcare. Therefore, the announcement is being made today in order to allow families time to make arrangements for the shift following the Thanksgiving break. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility. Our hope is to get back to face-to-face in-person instruction as soon as possible. Should you have any specific questions, please contact your child's building principal.

Sincerely,



Jane W. Bovalino, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Parent Informational Sessions

Elementary

Tuesday, November 24, 2020

11:30 a.m.

Please register [here](#) and the link will be sent to you. A recording of the meeting will be sent to you in case you are unable to attend.

Middle School/High School

Tuesday, November 24, 2020

10:30 a.m.

Please register [here](#) and the link will be sent to you. A recording of the meeting will be sent to you in case you are unable to attend.