

Updates from the District Office

January 3, 2021

Dear BSCSD Parents and Caregivers:

Happy New Year to you all. I am writing today to provide a brief update as to our status for the week ahead as well as the details of the statistics of the virus in the region and within the school district.

1. **Current Regional Data** – As we have learned over the course of the management of the COVID-19 virus, schools are not the source of the spread of the virus. Unfortunately though, this statistic tends to forget that our schools exist within communities and our community, similar to what we saw after the Thanksgiving holiday, is experiencing a rather significant increase in numbers of positive cases and associated quarantining. To give you a sense of this, when I reported to you on [December 23](#), the [7-day average](#) of positive cases in Saratoga County was at 6.9%. In our [December 30 Updates](#), that same percentage was at 9%. As of today, we are now at 11% which has prompted our district physician to be supportive of keeping elementary schools open while moving middle and high schools to remote instruction for a two-week period. Our intention, as noted last week, is to move our middle and high schools to remote instruction for the week ahead during which time we will make a determination as to whether we can return to our combination of in-person and remote learning beginning January 11, 2021.
2. **Current District Data** – Since December 22, we have been notified of approximately 30 positive cases of student and staff in our district as well as numerous students and staff being quarantined. One of the areas of operations that is being most challenged by this data is our transportation department. We are functioning with a skeleton crew at this point and additional positive cases and/or quarantining may require us to change our current plans. We will notify you as quickly as possible if this is the case.

In response to some of the questions that we have received on this topic, it is important to note here that each district has their own set of unique circumstances on which they base their decisions. There are districts in our region, for example, that have positive cases in the single digits and, therefore, there will be little impact to their operations. With this in mind, comparisons to other districts are very difficult to make (and I would always use caution when attempting to do so.)

3. **January 4 Reopening** – As noted in our December 30 *Updates*, the following plan will be in place for our reopening tomorrow, January 4:
 - a. **Grades K-5** – There will be no change and remote and in-person learning will continue to take place.
 - b. **Grades 6-12** – Students will be fully remote for the week of January 4-8.

Pinpoint screening will be reactivated for Monday morning. We ask that you please be sure to accurately complete the survey daily including the temperature check. It is our intention to run this model for the week of January 4-8 in hopes that we can get back to our full in-person/remote rotation (our hybrid model) beginning the week of January 11.

4. **Reporting Positive Cases** – Thanks very much to those of you who have utilized our COVIDreport@bscsd.org mailbox to report cases and quarantining to us. We ask that you please continue to use this method to notify us until further notice.

Please continue to [stay vigilant](#) in mask wearing, social distancing, avoiding large crowds, completing all portions of the Pinpoint screener each day, and practicing hand and mouth hygiene as these are the critical steps that will keep us all healthy thereby allowing our schools to stay open.

Thanks so much to you all.

Ken Slentz
Superintendent of Schools