

Dear BSCSD Parents and Caregivers:

A few items for your information today.

1. **Snow Days** – As we did last year, we will maintain our usual approach to snow days this year meaning that when the District is closed for inclement weather, we will be closed for instruction. Announcements for this will be through our typical media outlets including SchoolMessenger, our District website and Twitter feed, and local TV and radio stations. Should we get to a point where we have used all of our snow days and are at risk for not meeting the state-required number of instruction days and hours, we will revisit this decision.
2. **Bus Driver Shortage Days** – On days where we might experience a shortage of drivers similar to Friday, October 15 such that we cannot cover the absences with subs, mechanics, and/or office staff, we will still have in-person learning for the day. We will provide a combination of additional bus runs, parent drop offs, and student drivers. As the additional runs could realistically only be done for students in K-5, for students in grades 6-12 whose parents are unable to bring them in or for high school students who are unable to drive themselves in, we would follow our Quarantining and Exclusion Plan where students have access to instructional materials and tutoring. When it is possible for teachers to allow, remote learning access will be provided following our “Day One” rules. For the second grades K-5 afternoon run (to take the students who arrived on the second morning run home), students who are not in the BACC or YMCA programs or who are unable to be picked up by parents would be supervised by school staff until the bus arrives for pickup. Where time allows, students may be able to attend tutoring sessions in line with our *Quarantining and Exclusion Plan*.
3. **Minimizing Student Quarantining** – As noted in our October 15 Updates, we continue to work with our County Health Commissioner who has been a strong advocate for our county school districts with the NYS Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in looking for options including a Test to Stay (TTS) strategy, that will lessen the impact of the restrictions that are currently in place. This week, the NYS Department of Health released a memo on [Updated Testing and Quarantine Supplemental Information](#) that will provide us with options for reducing the amount of time in quarantine. Three key components from this document are as follows:
  - a. *Test to Stay for Asymptomatic Students* – For close contacts who do not have any of the [symptoms of COVID-19](#) but who would typically be quarantined under the current rules due to close contact with a person infected with COVID-19, the *Test to Stay* strategy would allow these students to avoid being kept out of school (but not other out-of-school activities) by testing negative with a rapid NAAT or antigen test (e.g., BinaxNOW) *on each school day for seven days after exposure*. This approach is being pilot tested in the South Glens Falls School District. As we await the decision from the county on allowing this strategy to be used in all districts in the county, we have ordered additional tests, applied for the required license to be able to conduct such tests in our schools, and will begin requesting permission from parents to conduct such testing. More to come on this.
  - b. *Testing Requirements for Symptomatic Students* – Students who have *had* symptoms of COVID-19 who are either (a) **are fully vaccinated**, or (b) **have had COVID-19 infection** within the last 90 days may return to school following a negative antigen (e.g., BinaxNOW) test result. Students who are *not* fully vaccinated and/or who have not had COVID-19 within the last 90 days must receive a negative NAAT result prior to returning to school after developing symptoms.
  - c. *Test out of Quarantine* – Currently and as some of you have experienced with your children, a student in Saratoga County can test out of quarantine after day 7 (of a 10 day quarantine) by

testing negative on day 5, by not having any symptoms of COVID-19, and sending the Department of Public Health Services required information that they will provide to you should your child need to be quarantined. While this only shortens the quarantine period by three days, these are three *more* days that our students can be in school.

4. **Vaccination Availability for 5-11 Year Old Students** – This morning the Saratoga County Health Commissioner informed us that they have ordered and anticipate receiving thousands of doses of vaccine for 5 – 11 year old students and that they may be able to begin vaccination clinics as early as next week. We will share this information as soon as it is available.
5. **Emergency Release Day** – An early dismissal drill has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 10, 2021. The school district will conduct a state-mandated early release drill as part of an Emergency Management Plan to prepare for conditions such as severe weather or unexpected building problems (e.g. loss of power or heat) that would require the district to release students early. Under real emergency conditions, parents would be notified through radio and television stations, and the district’s SchoolMessenger notification system. As a result of this drill, students will be released from school fifteen (15) minutes earlier than normal on November 10, 2021.
6. **Scottie’s Closet Offers FREE Clothing** – Our Middle School will host a Scottie’s Closet on Saturday, November 6, 2021 from 9 am to 1 pm. This school community event provides free gently used clothing, books, coats, and shoes annually to about 300 students, families and individuals. \*Please note: Attendees will need to register at the event in case contact tracing needs to be implemented and wear a mask in the school. Everyone will be given a ticket to shop during a specific 25 minute time period to limit the number in the cafeteria and allow for social distancing. Please contact the Middle School for additional information at (518)884-7200 or email [cjones@bscsd.org](mailto:cjones@bscsd.org).
7. **Employment Opportunities at BSCSD** – The Ballston Spa Central School District is seeking individuals to work at the district in a variety of positions. Currently openings are available for Teaching Assistants, School Aides, Special Education Aides, Cleaners and School Bus Drivers. Additional information is our website – click [HERE](#) - or call (518)884-7195 ext. 1398.

Our continued thanks for your support and partnership. Should you have any question on any of this information or questions in general, please connect with us at [schoolopening@bscsd.org](mailto:schoolopening@bscsd.org).

Thanks very much and enjoy the weekend!

Ken Slentz  
Superintendent of Schools

[www.bscsd.org](http://www.bscsd.org)