Monroe Township IT Department

A message from MONROE TWP

Dear Monroe Community,

I want to begin by thanking everyone for your continued patience and dedication to our students in Monroe. I know that this year have not been easy for any of us. The purpose of this message is to share some important information regarding the district’s schedule over the next few weeks.

As you know, over the past few weeks, we have seen a large increase in positive COVID cases not only in New Jersey but also in Middlesex County and specifically in Monroe Township. Our protocols have been working and we have not seen an in-school transmission in our district. Currently since November 16, we have 11 positive cases among staff and 37 positive cases among students, most of which are full remote students. The number of students and staff needing to quarantine in our schools and community has grown exponentially over this time period with the expectation that things will be getting worse. As of today, we have 104 staff members and about 70 students quarantining due to contact with a COVID-19 positive person, travel outside of NJ, or cold-like symptoms. Additionally, we have witnessed a large percentage of parents choosing for their child to move from in-person learning to fully remote learning as well as more students testing positive. Nearly every school district in Middlesex County and surrounding areas is now choosing to move to a fully remote model for the foreseeable future after the holiday break, which greatly compounds our staffing issues. With more staff out on child, medical, maternity, and quarantine leaves, all of these factors are directly impacting our ability to deliver a consistent program to our students.

With all this said, the district has reached a tipping point where we can no longer safely and effectively keep our schools open. The current data supports a move to full-remote learning to help mitigate the spread in our community and protect the well-being of our students, staff, and their families as we move into the end of the year. This is not a decision that is made lightly or without great thought. However, the health and safety of staff and students is paramount.

**On Wednesday, December 16, 2020, the district will move to full remote learning until Tuesday, January 19, 2021.** All students in grades 1 through 12 will follow their current class schedules as we transition to remote learning. Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students will revert to the original schedule from September. Building principals will communicate specific details with all families and staff. I will continue to monitor the data coming from the State of New Jersey Department of Health, as well as the mandates from the DOE to determine if more time in a fully remote environment is necessary.

For the week of December 16 through December 23, the school buildings will remain open for any teachers who want to work from their classroom, security, all office staff and anyone who is needed for the safe operations of the building. For the two weeks following winter break, January 4 through January 18, all school buildings will be closed to all staff, except custodians and food services. District offices will remain open during this time in January with limited staff to ensure the district continues all business operations. Your supervisors will communicate this schedule with each office. During the time of remote status, all meal pick-ups will continue as planned.

Added to all of this is the pending snow storm. During the health emergency, the district will have remote learning during any weather-related days. I will communicate to all staff members if district buildings are closed due to snow.

Today’s COVID-19 Update:
The High School, Middle School, Barclay Brook, Woodland, Applegarth, and Oak Tree were notified that 1 student tested positive in each school. All students are full remote students so not contacts were identified. The High School was also notified that 1 staff member tested positive. The staff member was in the building today. Close contacts were identified and notified to quarantine.

I am hopeful that the steps we are taking will help mitigate any spread and we will be able to reopen safely for in-person students on January 19.

If you or your child need assistance, please contact our guidance departments or building administrators. Thank you again for your continued understanding, perseverance, and patience. As always, if you have any questions, please reach out to your building administrators or my office. Please stay safe during the upcoming holiday season.

Thank you,
Dr. Alvich

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