

REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS

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Rocket Families,

After we moved R-PMS and R-PHS to “remote” as a result of a tremendous increase in COVID cases and quarantines, the following question was asked numerous times; **“When will R-PI move to remote learning?” The unfortunate answer is “now.”** As the person who has the responsibility, I have to say “enough” for now at R-PI. In spite of great efforts and intentions on the part of staff, students, and parents, the number of people in quarantine and/or isolation including those awaiting test results, including 25% or more of our core teaching staff, has made this decision necessary. Over the past two weeks, R-P has experienced a significant increase in positive COVID cases and a correspondingly high number of students and staff being placed into quarantine as a result of being considered “close contacts.” We were just informed of another “positive” student test, and those who might have been in “close contact” will be communicated with today. The result has been a tremendously disruptive impact of operating with so many students and staff working remotely. Our system is stretched incredibly thin. **We will be transitioning to remote learning at the Intermediate (5-6 Building) according to the following timetable:**

November 13 (today)- Continue in person learning. This will allow students and staff to solidify plans for remote learning.

November 16-November 25- R-P Intermediate will operate via remote learning. Your child’s teacher will share specifics and questions can be directed to the teacher or building principal as needed.

November 30- We tentatively plan to return to in-person (F2F) learning. How the numbers progress (or regress) will determine if this is likely or possible. With the Thanksgiving Holiday, and the gatherings associated with it, this date might need to be reconsidered.

This plan is designed to allow us to focus on teaching and learning, rather than COVID and contact tracing. It will also allow us to redeploy the small number of available “substitute teachers” to the remaining open buildings to allow them to continue F2F (face-to-face) learning. In order for R-P Intermediate, and all local schools for that matter, to be in or even return to school, we all need to be on the same page relative to mitigation strategies. There seems to be no other way for us to move forward; wear a mask, social/physical distance, keep your and your child’s physically social circle small, and wash hands regularly.

A few additional notes:

- All Elementary buildings will remain open. (All Pre-K through 4th grade)
- Child care centers will remain open.
- R-P will continue to provide meals. A schedule will be communicated by each buildings’ principal.



Rockets, this decision has come after watching our numbers spike. In the first 49 days of school, we had one confirmed positive case in our district. In the past 24 days, we have at least twenty nine positive cases (those reported to us and confirmed). Our rise in cases has occurred at the same times as Muskegon County has seen a significant increase in positive cases. As of this afternoon, we have more than 180 students and 11 staff in quarantine or isolation (or awaiting test results) with a majority of them a result of “out of school” events or encounters, and a huge majority at the 5th-12th grade levels. While almost every transmission of the virus can be traced to an out of school event or encounter, the numbers are such that, without a “pause” or “reset”, we can likely expect the transmission in and through school to escalate. In addition our current absent rates at R-PI is more than triple the norm. This decision is not being made in haste or without serious reservations. Any unscheduled break from F2F (face-to-face) learning is weighed against all potential alternatives before being decided. Being face-to-face for those who chose F2F is best.... Until the risks outweigh the benefits. We will work hard on our end to resume and maintain in-person instruction following this brief move to remote learning at Reeths-Puffer Intermediate.

Sincerely,

Steve

Steve Edwards

Superintendent, Reeths-Puffer Schools

