

REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS

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Rocket Families,

R-P Elementary will be moving to remote learning. This will begin on **Wednesday, November 18 at R-PEL.**

Today, November 16, 2020, we had two new positive cases with 36 individuals needing to quarantine as a result at **R-PEL.**

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 63 individuals at R-PEL, is too much to justify continuing at that building. Over the past two and ½ 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. 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 R-PEL according to the following timeline.**

November 16 and 17 (today and tomorrow)- Continue in person learning at **R-PEL.** This will allow students and staff to solidify plans for remote learning and for parents to make necessary arrangements. *Parents, if you do not want your child to attend on Tuesday, and can make other arrangements, we certainly will respect that decision.*

November 18-November 25- **R-P Elementary** 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. In order for R-P Elementary 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:

- Central, Twin Lake, and Pennsylvania Elementary Schools will remain open
- Child care centers will remain open.
- R-P will continue to provide meals. A schedule will be communicated by Mr. Klimsza.



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 28 days, we have at least thirty seven 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 200 students and 15 staff in quarantine or isolation (or awaiting test results) across the district. 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-PEL is more than five times 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 Elementary.

Sincerely,

Steve

Steve Edwards

Superintendent, Reeths-Puffer Schools

