

REETHS-PUFFER SCHOOLS

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Rocket Families,

Every decision we have made to this point about COVID-19 has been based upon data that we have “in hand.” We have not utilized speculative or predictive data, because of our commitment to making decisions based on what we “know.” The Thanksgiving Holiday break has caused us to necessarily reconsider this approach. The numbers in our county continue a steep upward trajectory in positive cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. Community spread is obvious. If we did not take the action listed below, based upon how long test results are taking, in addition to the backlog of cases at Public Health-Muskegon, we can predict a large number of “likely positive” students and staff will be walking our halls without information necessary to quarantine and isolate positive cases until they have possibly or likely spread the virus.

Based upon this information, **ALL K-8 buildings will be “remote” the week after Thanksgiving, returning on Monday, December 7.** The High School will continue remotely until the DHHS order expires on December 8, with a return on December 9.

I have to make this decision based on the overwhelming consensus that the Thanksgiving Holiday will cause a significant increase in cases. **This decision is recommended by Public Health Muskegon.** Over the past month, 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 continues to be stretched incredibly thin. The following timetable is now in place:

November 25 (Wednesday) – ½ day for Students and Staff, both in-person and virtually, as previously scheduled.

November 30-December 6- All **Pre-K-8th** grade students and staff 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-December 8- All **HS students** and staff will operate via remote learning. Your child’s teacher will continue to share specifics and questions can be directed to the teacher or building principal as needed.

December 7, 2020- We plan to return to in-person (F2F) learning at the **Pre-K- 8th** grade levels.

December 9, 2020- We plan to return to in-person (F2F) learning at the **High School**.

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. If staff, students and families follow the recommendations, this will be enough time to allow positive cases to run their course (in most scenarios) and quarantined individuals to finish their quarantine.



An additional note:

- **Meals will still be provided across the district. Your child’s building will communicate the days and times.**

Rockets, 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 in the district.



DISTANCE LEARNING BEFORE AND NOW



	BEFORE	NOW	WHAT IS THE SAME?
 Grading	 Assignments were ungraded. A “pause” in learning.	 Assignments are graded and feedback will be provided. School work is provided as a part of progressing students through our curriculum.	 Student physical, mental, and emotional well-being continues to be a primary focus.
 Attendance	 Truancy process was suspended.	 Attendance is required. Truancy laws remain in effect and we will intervene to keep students engaged with school.	 Staff are available and dedicated to your child’s educational success.
 Building Access	 Buildings were closed to everyone.	 Buildings are accessible for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Special Education Services</i> • <i>English Language Learning Services</i> • <i>Internet Connectivity</i> • <i>Mental Health Services</i> • <i>Other reasons pre-arranged with the school</i> 	 Don’t stress about falling behind, we are experiencing a global crisis and its impact is all encompassing.
 Technology Use	 Paper packets were frequently provided to students.	 Less paper packets and more online learning. We have built up our online resources and teacher training. Your child will be expected to work on a computer more often.	 Focus on wellness - take time for self care like exercise, playing games, talking about the stress we are under, and finding the positive.
 Transportation	 No school provided transportation.	 Transportation is available to students needing services as permitted.	 Meals will continue to be provided. The details will be provided by each building as the need arises.
			<b style="color: #4CAF50;">Stay Safe! Stay Healthy!

Sincerely,

Steve

Steve Edwards

Superintendent, Reeths-Puffer Schools

