



November 23, 2020

Dear Parents

With the beginning of the holiday season upon us, we wanted to take an opportunity to share a few thoughts regarding teaching and learning at our schools. Prior to the outset of school year, we developed “Fall 2020 Return to Learning” plans after concluding the last school year in remote learning. The Administration, Staff, and Boards of Education of our collective school districts chose to offer in-person learning because it provides huge academic, safety, social, emotional, and developmental advantages over remote learning. As we reflect on the present year to date, we are proud of how our students, families, and staffs have adapted to new rules and regulations and overcome obstacles to remain teaching and learning in-person. However, it certainly hasn’t been easy.

As you know, our state, region, county, and local community all have experienced significant increases in COVID-19 positivity rates and deaths. These increases have impacted our schools, as students and staff testing positive for COVID or being in close contact with a positive case have been forced to quarantine for extended periods of time. Our local health departments continue to allow us to make the determination whether to remain in-person or transition to remote learning based upon the COVID metrics in our schools and our ability to isolate ill persons quickly and sufficiently implement the CDC/IDPH COVID mitigation strategies in order to slow the spread of infection and prevent the school from an outbreak.

We saw positivity rates increase after Halloween and health experts worry that the same will be true after Thanksgiving. We believe now, more than ever, it is critically important to spend time with those you love. 2020 has presented all of us much difficulty and enjoying some degree of normalcy is important. As school district officials, while we recognize the need to enjoy time with family, we also believe the warnings issued by the Center for Disease Control and Illinois Department of Public Health that increased COVID cases are likely as a result of the travel and gatherings during Thanksgiving break.

On behalf of the students and staffs of our collective districts, we ask that you seriously consider the recommendations to protect yourselves and your family members while enjoying your time together. Our continued use of in-person learning will depend on our ability to effectively manage the increases in COVID positivity rates and the corresponding quarantine impact among students and staff. To that end, we will be extra vigilant in screening students and staff following the upcoming holidays. Students should not return to school after Thanksgiving break if someone in the household is having COVID symptoms or being evaluated for COVID or if the student has been in in close contact with someone with COVID. You may contact the schools over break and on the weekends regarding COVID issues using the following email addresses.

MVK Elementary ndillow@invkmavericks.org

Milton Pope School mgiertz@miltonpope.net

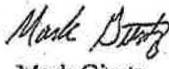
Seneca Grade School kwidman@sgs170.org

Seneca High School Nurse@senecahs.org

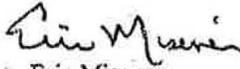
We wish all our families and safe and happy Thanksgiving!



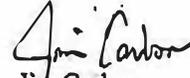
Nancy Dillow
MVK Elementary



Mark Giertz
Milton Pope School



Eric Misener
Seneca Grade School



Jim Carlson
Seneca High School