

# GLOVERSVILLE ENLARGED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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December 1, 2020

Dear Families of the Gloversville Enlarged School District:

In an effort to thwart the recent rise in COVID-19 infection rates, New York State has adopted a color-coded index system to track COVID-19 infection rates by region. The system identifies regions of the state based on specific metrics related to COVID-19. The color-coded system has three zones (yellow, orange and red). A Yellow designation indicates a specific region has entered a *"precautionary zone,"* meaning the positivity rate of all individuals tested for COVID-19 exceeds 3.5% over a seven-day rolling period. An Orange designation indicates a region has entered a *"warning zone,"* due to a positivity rate exceeding 4.5% over a seven-day rolling period, and a Red designation signifies a *"hot zone."* That requires a positivity rate over 5.5% for a seven-day period. As of today, Fulton County, which is in the Mohawk Region of the state, is *not* designated at all because our current seven-day positivity rate is 2.7%.

In a recent news conference, Governor Cuomo and the New York State Department of Health predicted that the infection rate across the state will rise over the holiday season, which could result in our region being designated at some point in the future. If Fulton County enters a yellow zone, we would be required to shift to fully remote instruction, unless we are able to test twenty percent of our students and staff on a weekly basis to demonstrate our infection rates are low enough to hold in-person instruction. Currently, Fulton County is not in a position to conduct COVID-19 testing for this purpose, which means all county schools would be educating all students remotely. GESD, along with all Fulton County school districts, are working with Nathan Littauer Hospital and the Department of Health on this issue.

Health experts, political leaders and educators universally agree that schools are safe for students in regards to COVID-19 transmission. We agree because the data is clear. Students are simply not contracting the virus from school. The Gloversville Enlarged School District will remain open to in-person learning as long as we are able, because students are safe when here and in-person learning is far more effective for children than remote learning. The only reasons we would close a classroom, school building, or the entire district to in-person learning is if we are mandated to do so by the Governor or the Department of Health, or if we were unable to safely open due to too many staff members being quarantined.

For more information on the New York State color-coded matrix and current infection rates in our region, please click on the following links:

<https://forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-county-dashboard>

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-details-covid-19-micro-cluster-metrics>

<https://forward.ny.gov/>

<https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/views/NYS-COVID19-Tracker/NYSDOHCOVID-19Tracker-Map?%3Aembed=yes&%3Atoolbar=no&%3Atabs=n>

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation as we navigate our way together through this pandemic.

Sincerely,



David Halloran  
Superintendent of Schools



*"Building a Bright Future for Our Community"*