

Friday Update  
December 4, 2020

I hope all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We continue to monitor the active COVID cases in our communities of Union and Marengo, as well as within our school buildings. In order for us to continue to remain IN-PERSON instruction, parents we ask that you be transparent in reporting when a family member is being tested for COVID-19 or if your child is feeling unwell. If a household member is being tested for COVID-19, all students must stay home while the test is being processed. If the test returns “negative”, then the students may return to school after confirming with the health office. If the test returns “positive”, then the students will be quarantined. Please speak with our health office staff to determine the length of that quarantine. Additionally, please keep your children home if they present symptoms of COVID. If you have any questions, please call the school health offices and speak to Mrs. Tara Weidner at Locust: 815-281-5024 and Mrs. Jennifer Turner at Grant/MCMS: 815-281-5026. We truly depend on the families to be honest and forthcoming to keep all the students and staff well and safe.

Through this pandemic we have been able to continue IN-PERSON instruction with no contact spreading of COVID-19 in the schools because we have been strident in following procedures and working very hard to mitigate the spread, but we may have to pivot platforms if we see an uptick in cases. As of this week, we have no indication that we need to pivot to Remote Learning, but I will continue to update this on a weekly basis.

We have noticed an increase of parents not completing the daily health app for their students. **This must be completed before students get on a bus or are dropped off at school.** If for some reason you are not receiving the 6:00 am text message link, contact Kathy [Burns—kburns@marengo165.org](mailto:Burns—kburns@marengo165.org).

We have two (2) more full weeks of school until our Christmas Break. Last day of school for students is Friday, December 18, 2020.

### **Health Update**

For the week of November 23-27, four (4) positive cases were reported—two (2) at Locust, one (1) at Grant and one (1) at MCMS. Since this was the week of Parent Teacher Conferences and Thanksgiving, we did not have to quarantine any students or staff.

For the week of November 30-December 4, one (1) positive case was reported at MCMS. No quarantining of students or staff was indicated because of Parent Teacher Conferences and Thanksgiving Break.

### **COVID Assistance**

If you are in need of assistance related to COVID the McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) has provided a designated phone number for families--the phone number is 224-760-0288. When you call, leave a voice message and they will return the call.

## Learning Platform Switch

If you wish to change your child (ren)'s learning platform, you must inform the district by **4:00 pm, Friday 12/4/2020**. Email directly to Kathy Burns: [kburns@marengo165.org](mailto:kburns@marengo165.org).

We have noticed that some families are seesawing from In-Person to Remote to In-Person again. We are only allowing this to occur at the semester break. Going forward, parents cannot seesaw between Learning Platforms. Switching platforms does cause additional burdens on the staff with scheduling, bussing, and possibly creating new sections of classrooms. So please take time to fully evaluate your decision-making, as you will only be allowed to switch one-time. We understand that there are occasionally circumstances that warrant an exception. We will evaluate those on a case-by-case basis.

## Christmas Caroling

Please mark your calendar for our Drive-Up Caroling at Locust School on Friday, December 11, 2020 from 6:00 pm -6:45 pm. Our staff will serenade you and Santa will be handing out candy canes! If you cannot come in person, the event will also be covered live by our local radio station, 94.3 FM. Special kudos to Miss Tara Oakes, music teacher at Locust School for working with staff on the music selections and hats off to all the staff who are participating in this Christmas Cheer!

## Snow Days

Dare I mention this in the context of jinxing myself! The District will be allowed to have all students Remote Learn on snow days. As in year's past, we usually have some notice of snow days and we would send home the day before all the necessary packets and electronic equipment for our students to be able to learn from home. More detailed information to follow on how exactly this would look for our In-Person Students. Obviously, our Remote learners would have no change to their learning platforms.

## Hot Spots

In order for the district to fully anticipate the needs of our families if we have to pivot to 100% Remote Learning we want to ensure that we have enough hot spots. Please email Mr. Brad Breakfield-- [bbreakfield@marengo165.org](mailto:bbreakfield@marengo165.org) if this circumstance relates to you. You would not be issued a hot spot unless we pivot to 100% Remote Learning, but we want to make sure that we have enough of them to distribute in a timely manner.

Let's continue to work together to keep our schools open and healthy!

*Lea Damisch—Superintendent of Schools*