

Iroquois County CUSD #9

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to provide you with some important information regarding changes that have been made within the district as well as some factual information to keep you abreast of many topics. I hope you find this information helpful in keeping you up to date with what is transpiring along the pandemic, restructuring and referendum fronts.

Pandemic Information

First, you will no longer be receiving a “robo call” for positive cases or contact tracing any longer unless it affects the routine or scheduling of our day in some way. The letters will be posted and those affected will be the only ones contacted accordingly.

Second, restrictions for sporting events have been loosened. Sporting events will still have some restrictions, but our students will now have the opportunity to play. Our athletic directors at both WCHS and Glenn Raymond are working very hard at following these guidelines given by our conferences and we will be relaying “the rules” to you as they transpire. Schedules will be posted shortly. All games will be streamed live for you to view.

Last, we are constantly monitoring the tiers and phases set forth to us by the state. With vaccines now becoming more readily available, it is our hope that we are on the right track to some normalcy. With this, we must still be vigilant in not letting our guard down. The quickest way to getting back to a regular day is to stay the course and remain patient as things we cannot control unfold.

Snow or Emergency Days

I would like to apologize for the confusion regarding the call that went out at 6:00 a.m. stating we would be in session that day. You will only receive a call if we are not having in-session school for either a remote learning day, planning day or emergency day.

5 Essentials Survey

Through this pandemic, the state is still making this a requirement of school districts. The window for collecting this data begins on February 3rd. Data collected is mandated from students, staff and parents. You should be expecting more information from building principals about how you can participate in helping us collect this data.

Restructuring

Nettie Davis School will be closing at the end of this year. Through the process of exploring the closing of Nettie Davis, we have discovered grant opportunities that would help fund the restructuring and relocation process. This process has prompted a referendum that has been placed on the ballot for April 6th.

The internal process of restructuring for what is fiscally responsible and what is best for Unit 9 staff and students is progressing. Where grade levels will be relocated and how the curriculum will be adjusted to provide an enriched learning environment that is best for all involves many parts. Our goal has shifted and been tweaked many times. We are still not finished with making these decisions.

We have made the decision to move grades 6-8 to the high school. After speaking with architects and the regional office on code specifications, we believe we can accomplish this safely while keeping these grades separated from the high school students. Administration and staff will be meeting to work on the details of this restructuring decision. Our focus now turns to the lower grade levels restructuring process.

Referendum

The April 6th ballot question is the result of a two year process discussing options, mitigation plans, and ways to place Unit 9 out of the floodplain. If the referendum passes, 75% of the cost would be funded through state and federal grants. IEMA has already approved one of two grants and it has now moved to the FEMA level for approval.

We will be holding two Open House Forums for the public to attend. Those dates are:

Monday, February 8th at Glenn Raymond from 6:00 p.m to 8:00 p.m, and

Tuesday, February 9th at WCHS from 6:00 p.m to 8:00 p.m.

Those attending will have the opportunity to tour the building, ask questions to our bonding and architect experts, and receive factual information about the referendum. While not affiliated with the school, “Unity For Our Community” representatives will also be available to assist anyone who would like to help in providing factual information to our community. You can also view their Facebook page by searching for “Unity For Our Community-Unit 9” for more information or email utaskforce9@gmail.com with specific questions that you would like answered or how you can volunteer if you would like to get involved.

The Board of Education and Unit 9 staff are committed to providing clear, relevant and accurate information to our community. Please join us at these open house meetings to learn more about the process that led to this ballot question and the important impact it will have on the future of Unit 9.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your continued support and commitment in working with us to provide the best possible opportunities for our students. It is a truly humbling experience to work with and for you.

Dr. David Andriano