

12/10/21

Good afternoon Cape parents/guardians,

As of this afternoon, we have successfully completed fifteen weeks of full-time teaching and learning. Just think of how many special moments each of your children have had in school over all of those days. Yes I know there have been tough times as well, but I also think it is so important to celebrate the good. I wonder what your children would say if you asked them this weekend about the highlights of their school year so far? Some of mine occurred as I wandered through our schools and listened and watched students and staff engaging with each other in learning and laughter. Our schools are happy places because of your great kids and our wonderful staff. That being said, December can be a tough time for some. Please know our teachers, school counselors, social workers, nurses, administrators, and countless others are ready to help any struggling student. Just please let us know.

As anticipated, our number of positive Covid cases have increased since the Thanksgiving break. I recognize receiving nearly daily letters from me about another case or two can be disconcerting. So I did some number crunching to see if I could help quantify the situation for us all. We have had 15 positive cases since 11/30 and that accounts for a .84% positivity rate for our school population (students + staff) over that past two weeks. Whereas Cumberland County currently has a 5.29% positivity rate. This differential gave me some level of relief. The increasing cases in Cape are not good news and my heart goes out to those infected or quarantined as a result. However, I think we still sit in a good place in comparison with almost every other community in the state. If Cape was suddenly nearing the Cumberland County number I would be quite alarmed. Although, I still humbly request we all try to do our part to reduce the community spread of Covid and keep our Cape positivity rate down. Every single case has a significant impact.

I want you to know that I think about Covid nearly every waking hour and I even dream about it in my few and far between sleeping hours. I am dedicated to keeping students and staff safe and our schools open. My leadership style is to listen to varying opinions, consider data, and make informed, timely decisions. I can certainly take quick action when warranted, but I am not prone to making rash decisions. The District Planning Committee (DPC- [video link](#)) met this week and had a discussion about enhancing our mitigation measures around sports and other extra-curriculars. However, we did not make a determination in that meeting as I asked for some more time to reflect. I met with Dr. Sonti, our school doctor, this afternoon to further process my thinking. I will be curious to examine our case numbers next week. All this to say, the DPC will meet again in the near future and once again consider our mitigation strategies. Quantitative case data will help guide that decision-making process. In addition, I am hopeful that ages 16+ will soon be able to have a booster shot and that our 5-11 population will become fully vaccinated in time for the upcoming school vacation. Please consider signing your child(ren) up for pooled testing because it could keep them in school even if they are deemed a close contact.

CESD Pooled Testing Program Consent Forms

Under 18 (Minor) Consent Form:

<http://testcenter.concentricbyginkgo.com//minor-consent>

CESD Access Code: 0C46EP

Some Updates from this Week & Upcoming Events:

Covid Vaccine Clinic for 5-11 year olds and booster shots for staff held today

We were thrilled to hold the second round of vaccines conducted by MaineHealth today in the Pond Cove gym. We are thrilled that 86 CEMS students and 192 PC students received their second dose. They will be fully vaccinated by 12/24. MaineHealth was also able to provide 33 Covid boosters to staff.

Thank you volunteers and staff for making this so successful and fun with superhero costumes. Assistant Principal, Sarah Forrey-Pettit, also cheered on the students in a unicorn costume.



Super Nurse Taylor was also on the scene!!! Terrific Nurse Young also was instrumental!!!



Building Oversight Committee Continues....

New Schools for Cape: An Investment for Our Community & Our Kids!

The two new schools (in one building) will sit on the hill where the Pond Cove & CEMS are today. Can you picture it from this view from the high school?



Can you picture it from this view overlooking the baseball field, softball field, and stadium?

For more information go to the following:

<https://www.cape.k12.me.us/page/building-committee>

[Fiscal Subcommittee](#)

[Public Outreach Subcommittee](#)

[School Concept Design Subcommittee](#)

[Building Oversight Committee](#)

Click [here](#) to review the presentation for the Site Location Committee's decision.

If you click [here](#) and scroll down, Building Oversight is all together on CETV.

Snow Day Plan

I have now had the chance to review feedback from students (3-12) and staff (K-12) on the following snow day options: 1) Have traditional snow days (knowing each snow day means going a day longer in June); 2) Have virtual learning days (similar to election day) that would count as a snow day; or 3) Have a Hybrid/Combination of both traditional and virtual days. The following underlying facts may help you consider this topic: 1) We need 175 student days (meaning a traditional snow day means one school day longer in June); 2) We need to provide students with food (sent home the day before) for a Virtual Day to count as a school day; 3) Devices would need to be sent home the day before a potential Virtual Day; and 4) Virtual Days would require that Cape has power & internet access. **I will be sharing my plan to the School Board at their meeting on 12/14.**

Upcoming Events:

- Regular School Board Business Meeting
 - Dec 14 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM Town Council Chambers
- School Concept Design Sub Committee
 - Dec 15 from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
 - <https://capeelizabethschools-org.zoom.us/j/84394045723?pwd=TDBxc25aczBPWFJ5a08wY0l0OFFldz09>
 - Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device: Please click this URL to join.
<https://capeelizabethschools-org.zoom.us/j/84394045723?pwd=TDBxc25aczBPWFJ5a08wY0l0OFFldz09> Passcode: 7y@v&vE@
- Public Outreach Sub Committee

- Dec 20 from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
- <https://capeelizabethschools-org.zoom.us/j/83694964874>
- haltenburg@capeelizabethschools.org is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Join Zoom Meeting <https://capeelizabethschools-org.zoom.us/j/83694964874> Meeting ID: 836 9496 4874
- **Holiday (No School)**
 - Dec 23 to Jan 1

Celebrate the Good (CTG)

What incredible concerts we had at CEMS on Wednesday & Thursday evenings. I have attended many concerts in my administrative career and I need to say our students rank right up there with their singing and playing!!!
Great job Ms. LeBorgne & Ms. Ramsey





Covid Update

We have had 15 positive Covid cases associated with our schools since Thanksgiving. Several were discovered through our pooled testing program. Due to their participation in our pooled testing program and/or being fully vaccinated allowed hundreds of students to stay in school this week. I am pleading with you to please keep your children home if they are sick. I know it can be inconvenient, but it may reduce the spread of Covid and thus help keep our schools open.

Pooled Testing Data

Week/Testing Dates	12/6-12/7	11/29-12/1
Enrolled	1,316	1,306
Participated	1,188	1,159
Positive cases	2	2
Pools	77	72
Negative Pools	74	70
Positive Pools (requires individual testing)	2	2
Indeterminate Pools (requires individual testing)	1	0
Unusable Pools	0	0

BinaxNOW rapid individual tests	40	35
CEHS participants	285 (226 students, 59 staff)	262 (205 students, 57 staff)
CEMS participants	419 (354 students, 65 staff)	423 (358 students, 65 staff)
PCES participants	484 (424 students, 60 staff)	466 (408 students, 58 staff)
Central Office participants	9	8
Enrolled, did not participate (absent, no show, etc)	128	147
opt outs	0	0
Enrollment next week (open until midnight each Th.)	1,356 (+40 as of 12/8)	1,316

In closing, I wish you and your families a lovely weekend. Please know the staff is working extremely hard for your children. We want the very best for every child.

Have a great weekend and stay safe,
Chris

Chris Record, Ph.D.
 Superintendent
crecord@capeelizabethschools.org