



Richmond-Burton CHSD 157
Nippersink SD 2

Office of the Superintendent

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January 2, 2022

Dear District 2 and District 157 families,

I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year, and I hope you have had a relaxing winter break. I am writing today to update you on the latest Covid-19 policies, and to reassure you that both Districts will be returning to in-person education Monday, January 3, 2022.

There have been many questions regarding the increase in Covid-19 cases based on the new variant, Omicron. The following information is provided to help answer those questions.

Remote Learning

There is no option for District 2 or District 157 to return to remote learning simultaneously for all schools within both Districts. That option only exists for the few districts that have a state-approved e-learning plan (which we do not) or participate in the state's competency-based learning pilot.

Therefore, on any particular day, should either District lack adequate staff to remain open due to the surge in Covid-19 cases, our only option would be to close all schools for that day. This would be similar to the manner in which snow days are handled, and the day(s) would be made up at the end of the year.

However, individual classrooms or individual schools may be closed at the directive of the McHenry County Department of Health when an outbreak has been declared. In those instances, remote learning may occur on a very limited basis for the short term.

It remains my firm belief students should be in school and learning in person to the greatest extent possible. However, we must plan for all contingencies to ensure the safety, health, and continued learning of all our students and staff.

Updated Guidance from the CDC

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released new guidelines that reduces quarantine duration, and encourages test-to-stay protocols to keep students in school. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) also adopted these new guidelines for the general public.

Unfortunately, the IDPH has not updated their quarantine guidance for schools. The IDPH recently informed school districts that new school-based quarantine guidance will be released sometime in January. Until then, schools are to continue following the previous quarantine protocols as established by the IDPH.

Snow Days

If we should have hazardous weather conditions that reach the severity of needing to cancel school for the day, we will notify families through the use of our automated call system, texting system, as well as posting cancellation information to our websites. When possible, we try to notify families as early as possible the evening before the cancelled school day.

There will be no remote learning taking place on school days canceled due to weather. All weather-related school cancellations will be made up at the end of the year, as in the past.

It is my commitment to keep you informed of any new developments, and to advocate for the students and families in both District 2 and District 157. To ensure the voices and needs of both Districts are heard, I will return to meeting weekly with the MCDH and other county and state officials on Monday, January 3, 2022.

Finally, I want to thank our entire community for the tremendous support that continues to be given to our schools and staff.

Sincerely,

Tom Lind

Dr. Tom Lind
Superintendent of Schools