

December 30, 2021

Dear Teaneck Parents/Guardians, Students and Staff,

Normally, I would not be writing to you on a holiday week; but we are not living in “normal times”. As you can see on the news, and perhaps even amongst your loved ones, COVID cases are rising rapidly each day. Based upon new information regarding how long someone is deemed “contagious”, the CDC updated their quarantine guidelines for *asymptomatic* cases - someone who tests positive but exhibits NO symptoms - and even for symptomatic cases. Still a challenge remains regarding the ability to get a COVID-19 test or even an appointment with a doctor. Further, our greatest concern is ensuring we have adequate staff in place in order to keep our instructional and non-instructional operations moving.

With all of this in mind, I’m sure you have many questions about our ability to return to school next week - especially, what steps will we take to keep everyone safe?

In consultation with the Teaneck Health Department, we have determined that our schools will remain open next week (Jan. 3-7) - using a HALF DAY schedule (for instruction and transportation if provided) - whereby lunch will be provided in a “Grab and Go” format to all students before they leave each day. **This decision was made in an effort to maintain some in-person instruction - immediately after the holiday week when we expect a large number of COVID-19 cases - while greatly reducing the time in school when our students are not wearing masks.** Unfortunately, this means we will not be able to have the SACC program next week; but depending upon how next week goes, it will hopefully resume on Monday, January 10.

Other new protocols for the month of January (and possibly beyond) include:

- The district will now use a 10 day quarantine for positive cases **with symptoms**. However, per the new CDC guidelines, if someone is **asymptomatic for the first five days**, they are no longer deemed “contagious”. Therefore, our new requirement will be that if you test positive but are asymptomatic for 5 days AND test negative on day 5, then you/your child may return to work/school after submitting the negative test result.
- If you take a rapid/antigen test and are “positive” but unable to obtain a PCR test, you may submit a picture of your rapid test results as proof of your positive case. Please be sure to take this picture within the designated time frame noted on the test guidance. Students will receive virtual instruction with a positive rapid test. Our staff will receive a separate memo from Human Resources on testing guidance.
- School nurses will have a supply of rapid tests to use if a child is symptomatic. They will call the parent/guardian before testing. If you do not want your child tested, you will be asked to come pick up your child and test on your own.
- Central Office will remain virtual for the week of January 3 unless needed in the office.
- **Wellness Attestation Form**: On the morning of our return, everyone will once again need to complete the Wellness Attestation Form to “re-certify” that they are healthy and can

safely return to school/work. **On Monday, January 3, please go to:** [Wellness Attestation Form](#) and click the appropriate school (or schools for each child in the district).

- Deep Cleanings of all district offices are taking place this week and will continue throughout the month of January.

Additionally, I want to remind our TPS families that, in partnership with Holy Name Medical Center, we will be hosting another pediatric vaccine clinic on Monday, January 10 at Benjamin Franklin Middle School. The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and lessens the severity of this disease. I hope you will consider this for your unvaccinated 5-17 year old child/ren. For more information and to make an appointment, please see the homepage of the district website: [Pediatric Clinic Information](#).

In closing, I want to assure you that this was not an easy decision and it is one that we do not take lightly. Please continue to stay safe during this holiday week and above all, please wear a mask in public settings.

Thank you for your patience and here's to a much healthier 2022!

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Irving, Superintendent of Schools