

January 29, 2021

Dear Teaneck Parents/Guardians, Students & Staff,

On Monday, we successfully welcomed back our elementary students, and we remain optimistic that we will be able to continue with our return of middle and high school students over the next few weeks.

It is important to note that COVID-19 transmission rates remain very high and will continue to remain high in the U.S. for the next few months. Still, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) announced this week that in-person instruction should continue, provided social distancing and mask-wearing protocols are in place.

It is my intention to continue offering in-person instruction while of course following the CDC's and local & State Health Department's safety recommendations and protocols. But as I reflect on our first few weeks of opening schools, it has become quite clear that - as is happening across the country - **COVID-19 direct and secondary exposures will also remain very high for the balance of this school year.** NOTE: Secondary exposure means that while someone tested positive, during a specific timeframe, you did not have direct contact with that person, but you came into contact with someone else who did.

In our effort to be transparent, I want to make sure everyone is aware of how we will proceed with our communications regarding such exposure moving forward:

- 1.) If you have direct or secondary exposure to a student or staff member that has tested positive for COVID-19, you will receive notification from the District in real-time (meaning, on the same day that we are notified). This notification will include any requirements for testing or needing to quarantine.
- 2.) If the above does not apply to you, you will still receive a weekly communication notifying you of any COVID-19 cases in your respective school. Such notification will simply serve to keep you informed and will not require any specific actions on your part. If your child's teacher remains remote, they may have had secondary exposure and out of an abundance of caution, we are having that teacher work from home. Again, you will be notified directly if there is any required action on your part. *Also if you do not receive a weekly notification, then there was nothing to report for your school that week.*

The District is not able to control what happens in someone's home life, nor can anyone control whose spouse, friend or loved one gets COVID-19. However, we must do our part to follow safety guidelines - especially while present in our school and district buildings. If we act responsibly, we can limit exposure rates.

Please continue to practice social distancing, wear a mask (even double up), and wash your hands frequently.

Next week, I will notify you on my decision regarding the return of middle school children. If all goes well, that will happen on Monday, February 8.

Thank you for your continued support and patience during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Irving, Superintendent of Schools