

Lopatcong Township School District

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

Although we have mitigated COVID-19 spread within our schools, community spread exists and has increased in the recent weeks. This past week, the COVID-19 Activity Level in our region increased from moderate to high. Unfortunately, this increase affects the current functioning of the District.

The best place for our students, socially, emotionally, and educationally, is in the building with teachers and classmates; It is our goal to offer in person learning in a safe environment. Unfortunately, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) extends exclusion and contact tracing beyond current expectations when regions enter the high risk level of activity; While in "high risk" status, the NJDOH requires school districts to exclude every untested symptomatic individual, contact trace, and exclude all close contacts. Due to these new guidelines, creating a revolving door of quarantining staff and students, our ability to have a safe, consistent, and efficient in-person program will be stifled.

After much consultation, discussion and deliberation, we need to switch to a fully remote program, for all students, beginning Monday, November 23rd, both Blue and Gold Cohort students will now attend all classes remotely.

Acknowledging the hardship this may cause, it is our goal to return to school as soon as possible. However, with anticipated family gatherings and travel during the holidays, inevitably, there will be an increase in the number of both staff and students needing to quarantine and self-isolate. To allow for better planning for both childcare and instruction, the decision was made to remain remote until January 19th.

As we approach Thanksgiving, this is not the letter I wanted to write. However, I would be remissed to not share; I am thankful for the Lopatcong Staff and Faculty for their resilience and determination to make sure our students are safe and learning. I am grateful for a community that cares and is invested in the future of our students and I am optimistic that we will, once again, be together in the near future.

Thank you for your continued support.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Debra Mercora, EdD

Superintendent

