



ROCKAWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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MRS. PHYLLIS ALPAUGH
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

November 20, 2020

Dear Rockaway Borough Families and Staff,

Hope this letter finds you well as we prepare for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday.

While we have been extremely fortunate these past months in keeping our buildings open for in-person instruction, the most recent information reported by the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) yesterday indicates that the number of positive cases of COVID-19 has risen thus moving the Northwest Region of the state which includes Morris County from “moderate” (yellow) to “high risk” (orange). With this move comes added risks both at school and at home that most likely may increase even more in the coming weeks especially with the onset of the holiday season during which the likelihood of families and friends gathering together inside and outside of the home will occur.

Again, while our hope at this time is to continue to move forward with in-person instruction, the [NJDOE COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for LHDs for K-12 schools](#) are advising districts to prepare to take the following actions in consultation with their local Health Departments once a region moves to the “high risk” category:

- Consider implementing full remote learning. Parents should prepare for the possibility of needed increased childcare should school have to quickly pivot to remote learning.
- Restrict activities that involve interactions with multiple cohorts of children.
- If in-person learning is able to continue, implement enhanced contact tracing and exclusion of close contact with students and staff who have COVID-19 symptoms even if not yet tested. This would include staff or students who call in sick.

I understand the difficulty that switching to full remote instruction might cause families, but I just wanted you to be made aware in advance that taking that step may become necessary depending on current health conditions. Please know that decisions such as these are never made lightly, but sometimes are necessary to ensure the health and safety of our students, staff and families. Needless to say, I will keep you informed of any future developments.

In the meantime, as of now, our new hybrid model is scheduled to begin November 30th. If you are planning to travel over Thanksgiving, please make sure you inform either the building principal and/or school nurse especially if your travel requires a quarantine period and you intend to have your child(ren) attend classes virtually when you return as the list for travel restrictions changes weekly. <https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/travel-and-transportation/which-states-are-on-the-travel-advisory-list-are-there-travel-restrictions-to-or-from-new-jersey#direct-link>

As always, stay safe and best wishes to you and your family.

Phyllis Alpaugh
Superintendent