



Otto-Eldred School District

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November 20, 2020

Dear O-E Community,

This past week, the stress and strain of COVID-19 has really impacted our school district and our normal operations. Our staff has gone above and beyond to maintain operations as normal we can throughout the week. Next week, our staff will be stretched further, creating more possible holes and gaps that we cannot overcome.

At noon, the updated data and reporting for McKean County shows us in "Substantial" level of transmission for a 2nd consecutive week. Although every zip code is different, that designation will be accompanied by a recommendation from PDE and PA DOH to move to full-remote learning for the entire county. Being proactive vs reactive will provide us a better opportunity to return to our in-person model. Keep in mind, if we move to remote learning, we will still maintain some students in our buildings. We can also decide to move to remote learning by grade level. I know the elementary is MUCH better served by our in-person model. The elementary is set up better to withstand any "close contact" tracing that may occur.

Before making any decision on any change in our instructional model, I have carefully considered the impact and the return. Are we stretched too thin? Are we creating more issues that will move us toward remote for a long period of time? If we change now, what do we need to see in the data to return? Regardless of what we see locally, are we expecting to hear a significant move from our Governor? There is legitimate concern these decisions will be made for us in the near future. There is also a legitimate concern as to the status of our community "health" after break. We understand the importance of being with family over Thanksgiving break. The unintended impact of family gatherings, not to mention the latest Travel Order, will not be known until the following week. This timing will not provide the district time to adjust and make plans before we would re-start after break.

So, with all that said, we need to move forward and plan for next week and beyond. While nothing over the past 8 months has been easy, any decision to move away from our in-person model is a struggle. We know being "in-person" with our students is best. Putting all the "pieces" together, I feel the following is our best chance to maintain in-person instruction long-term. We will work with all to minimize the impact on students. It may not be ideal, but continued communication between school and home will be key.

Monday (11/23) - maintain normal operations for both buildings

Tuesday (11/24) & Wednesday (11/25)-

- OEHS (grades 7-12) will move to remote-learning, students notified will be invited /permitted to come to school. Students and families have received notification (or will today) if they should plan to still attend in person.
- HS Staff will report as normal to the HS to provide instruction to students.
- Elementary will **continue** in-person instruction all week.
- Transportation will run as normal for the morning. A few changes may occur in afternoon.
- CTC students can attend as normal; they will return home for the PM classes (unless they are staying at HS)
- Meals will be served at HS for students attending, meal pick up will be available for HS students either at the HS or at the elementary. Meals for Tuesday and Wednesday should be ordered at www.schoolcafe.com prior to 9pm the evening prior. Pick-ups will occur Tuesday and Wednesday from 11:30-12:30 in the parent pick up area at the elementary and in the bus circle at the high school.
- ASVABs will be held as scheduled on Wednesday. Students will need to coordinate transportation home after testing. (mostly 10th graders).
- Practices will be permitted to occur after school, per the announced schedule.

Thursday (11/25) through Monday (11/30) - Break (Relax and enjoy some turkey - **safely**)

Tuesday (12/1) through Friday (12/4) - Unless we are told otherwise or circumstances change

- OEHS will continue with remote-learning (same as previous week)
- OEES will continue in-person instruction
- CTC can continue attending (same as previous week)
- Transportation will continue (as planned the previous week)
- Practices may continue (additional safety measures will be implemented)

I am viewing this as a temporary adjustment to help our schools maintain operations long-term. I have full confidence our staff will do whatever is needed to keep educating our students.

Thank you to all, this is definitely a team effort! Please plan to be safe over break. No one likes wearing a mask, but it helps. Be aware of your 6 foot circle to avoid being a Close Contact. Avoid large gatherings!

I will host a Community Zoom Session on Monday at 4pm to review our current status and plans. Registration link will be shared via email and posted on OESD Facebook.