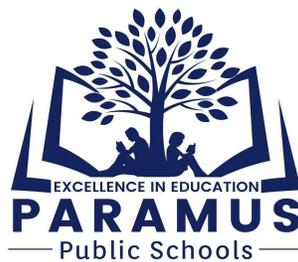


Office of the Superintendent
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November 25, 2020

Dear Paramus Community,

Throughout this school year, our approach to designing, implementing, and adjusting our learning models has remained consistent in its prioritization of health and safety above all else. As a community, we have come together in our adherence to the enhanced health and safety protocols that have allowed our school buildings to remain safe places for our staff and in-person students to participate in the learning process. While we have needed to implement COVID-19 related quarantines of student and staff groups (you may view data related to these quarantines on the district's new [COVID-19 Quarantine Dashboard](#)), our number of confirmed in-school transmissions of COVID-19 remains at **zero**.

However, based on the criteria established by the New Jersey Department of Health, there are situations beyond the control of individual school districts that may compel those districts to implement full-remote learning for all students. As you are aware, our region--like much of the State--is currently considered "High Risk" for COVID-19 transmission according to the most recent [COVID-19 activity level report](#), and the case rate (number of cases per 100,000 people) and percent positivity (percentage of total positive COVID-19 tests out of all COVID-19 test performed) continue to steadily increase at an exponential rate. As I have mentioned numerous times since this trend of weekly significant increases began in October, these region-wide and state-wide numbers have a direct correlation to the increasing likelihood of individual school districts needing to transition to full-remote learning models due to local community spread of COVID-19. Indeed, in its [COVID-19 guidelines for public schools](#), the New Jersey Department of Health identifies "very high risk of community transmission" as the highest level in a [hierarchy of school closure scenarios](#) that require quarantines and/or school/district closures.

Unfortunately, the number and frequency of COVID-19 positive cases have now risen to levels that place the Paramus community within the "very high risk of community transmission" category. **As a result, the NJDOH's criteria have compelled the Paramus Department of Health, in consultation with the New Jersey Department of Health, to recommend that all schools within the district switch to a full-remote learning model beginning Monday, November 30, 2020 with an anticipated return to in-person learning date of Tuesday, January 19, 2021.**

Please keep in mind that the return date of January 18 is a projection based on the current rate of transmission across the community and region and the subsequent length of time that is required to allow that transmission rate to decrease to levels at which our students may return to in-person learning. **If rates within our community do not subside, however, we may be forced to extend the full-remote period beyond that date. Therefore, for both the health of all members of our community and the ability of our students to return to the school buildings as quickly as possible, it remains absolutely imperative that we join together as a community in our strict adherence to following all health and safety protocols. Our students are depending on all of us to meet our individual responsibilities as members of a**



larger community. Our case numbers will not decrease if we do not hold ourselves accountable to acting in the interests of the greater good.

While I know that this district-wide transition to full-remote learning is extremely disappointing and disruptive to many members of our school community, it is a change in learning model that has been determined for us entirely by the current health data. Our community has repeatedly shown throughout this health crisis that we can rise to meet and overcome the many challenges facing us. Let us remain resolute in our commitment to each other to continue that tradition.

I wish each of you a healthy and safe Thanksgiving. Thank you for your continued support, understanding, and collaboration.

Sincerely,

Sean Adams
Superintendent of Schools