

November 20, 2020

Dear Springfield Public Schools Community:

The purpose of this letter is to update you regarding the status of our hybrid learning program.

As we have noted throughout this challenging year, the health and safety of our students and staff is our first priority. **In consultation with the local health official, and in consideration of the upcoming holiday season, Springfield Public Schools will pause hybrid instruction and will shift to fully virtual instruction for PK-12 students beginning Monday, November 23, 2020.** Please note, this shift does not impact the virtual schedules for our PK-8 schools for November 23-24, 2020. It is our hope that this temporary pause will mitigate the risk for increased spread of COVID-19 in our community, and allow us to maintain a consistent schedule of virtual instruction.

Our consultation with the local health officials and the decision to pause in-person instruction was based on consideration of the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) COVID-19 Activity Level Report for the Week of November 14, 2020, which was released yesterday, November 19, 2020, and shows that the “Central East Region” in which Springfield is located, and all surrounding regions of the state, are now identified as having “High Levels” of COVID-19 activity. This report advises the state health departments regarding regional rates of spread of COVID-19. It can be found here:

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID_19_Report_Week_46.pdf. At the bottom of this letter, please find links to other resources consulted in this decision-making process.

We expect to resume district-wide in-person hybrid learning the week of January 11, 2021. All decisions regarding resuming in-person instruction will be made in consultation with the local health department and based on available public health data. There is no question that the only way we will be able to resume in-person learning opportunities will be for our community to remain vigilant and follow the guidance of the NJDOH and the CDC to minimize indoor gatherings, wear masks, wash hands, and monitor your health for symptoms.

Information about related services for students (OT, PT, Speech, etc) will be shared by the Special Education departments. During this period of time, food distribution will continue, and information about the schedule, along with shifts in the schedule due to the holidays, will continue to be shared via email and social media. In addition, our technology help desk will continue to provide support to ensure access to virtual instruction. If you need assistance with technology during this time, please reach out to tech_contact@springfieldschools.com.

We are proud of the work our staff has done to maintain flexibility and increase our ability to be responsive to this public health crisis. Since September, we have successfully transitioned from a full virtual model to an in-person hybrid model, and we are now prepared to pivot between these models as necessary with limited interruptions in student learning schedules. I am confident that our teachers and staff will continue to provide high-quality, meaningful learning experiences for students throughout this period of virtual instruction.

Finally, we recognize and acknowledge that this is a time of high anxiety and concern resulting in the ongoing disruption in our lives. If your child or a member of your family needs support,

please do not hesitate to reach out to our schools. Links to support social-emotional health can be found here: <https://www.springfieldschools.com/Content2/890>

Please note, additional information and communication will be shared by your school principal, and we ask that you direct your questions or concerns to your school principal.

Thank you for your ongoing support, patience, and understanding during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Rachel Goldberg

Links/Resources:

https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/RecommendationsForLocalHealthDepts_K12Schools.pdf

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/statistics/covid/>

<https://www.springfieldschools.com/Content2/-content-922>

<https://www.springfieldschools.com/Content2/924>