November 19, 2020

Warrior Country:

Last evening, I met with the school board to discuss a plan for our instructional model as we move into the holiday season. As you are aware, Bradford County continues to be a “substantial transmission” county for six consecutive weeks. We continue to see an increase in the number of cases within the county. I am very happy to report that as of today, our district has had only 6 cases that have quarantined about 160 students since the start of the school year. Because we are able to social distance in many of our classes, our students continue to wear their face coverings, our families continue to screen their children for symptoms, and parents and guardians openly communicate with the school if they are unsure on whether or not to send their child to school, I believe we have done a very good job in keeping our students and staff safe.

As you know, not only in Bradford County, but across the state and the rest of the country, we continue to see a rise in cases. Mitigation measures were put in place to keep all Pennsylvanians safe and healthy. As a district, we acknowledge that many of you will be gathering with families both within our borders and outside of the Pennsylvania border. These larger gatherings by our families raise concern for us in the district as we know it increases the chance of the virus spreading. If our students were to contract the virus over the Thanksgiving break, we increase the likelihood of outbreaks within our school, which raises major health concerns for our students and staff. **Because of these concerns, we are opting to provide three days of remote instruction from Wednesday, December 2 through Friday, December 4, 2020. Assuming we do not see an outbreak in cases, we are planning on returning to in-person instruction on Monday, December 7, 2020.**

We will also halt all extra-curricular activities and winter athletics effective Thursday, November 26, 2020. This includes all practices, games, and voluntary workouts. These activities can resume on Monday, December 7, 2020.

Earlier this week, the Secretary of Health updated an Order that affects face coverings and also signed a new Order regarding travel. For information on these Orders, please visit the Department of Health website at <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Universal-Masking-FAQ.aspx> (face coverings) and <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Travelers.aspx> (travel restrictions). A few important points about each of the Orders:

**Face Coverings (effective for CASD on Monday, November 23)**

* All students will be required to wear face coverings for recess and physical education classes under the new Order.
* Students will be permitted to still have face covering breaks.
* All spectators, coaches and athletes (both active and passive participants) are required to wear masks at all indoor and outdoor events. This means that wrestlers will wear face coverings while wrestling, and basketball players will be wearing face coverings while actively playing on the court.
* Students and staff will no longer be able to wear partial shields. All face shields must cover the nose and mouth, extends below the chin and to the ears, and leave no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield’s headpiece.
* When alone in their office or classroom spaces, staff will be permitted to take off face coverings. Once another individual enters the room, the face covering must be worn.

**Travel Restrictions (effective Friday, November 20)**

* The Secretary of Health issued an Order requiring anyone who visits from another state to have **a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to entering**the commonwealth.
* If someone cannot get a test or chooses not to, they must **quarantine for 14 days** upon arrival in Pennsylvania.
* Pennsylvanians visiting other states are required to have **a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to their return** to the commonwealth, or to **quarantine for 14 days** upon return to Pennsylvania. This does NOT apply to people who commute to and from another state for work or medical treatment.

The district would like to thank all of you for your continued cooperation on the changes I have outlined above. We would also like to thank the families who continue to be transparent and honest with the school district by contacting us if you have any questions or concerns about decisions on sending your child to our school, based on each family’s unique case. By taking these proactive steps, I believe so far, we have been able to control the spread of the COVID-19 in our buildings.

As friendly reminder, please make sure you continue to actively communicate with the school district any positive cases that you or your child may have over the break. This reminder also goes for all families when it comes to close contacts. Please continue to communicate all close contacts with you and your family to our district.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email us at our Questions email account (questions@canton.k12.pa.us) and we will be sure to respond as soon as possible. Stay safe, stay healthy, and enjoy your Thanksgiving with your family.

Yours in Education,

Eric Briggs, D.Ed.

Superintendent of Schools

Canton Area School District