



Dear Riverview Parents,

Greetings! We hope that you enjoyed the holiday weekend. It has certainly been an interesting month thus far! On top of the usual Covid-related issues, we've had to deal with a litany of disruptive snow and ice storms! Thank you for being so patient and understanding during a turbulent few weeks.

Please read through the following items below in their entirety:

1. **New CDC Guidelines for Schools** – You have probably heard on the news that the CDC has put out a new report regarding schools. The link to the full report is included below in yellow. If you don't have time to read the full document, here is the summary: There is not much that's new here. The strategies highlighted by the CDC encourage schools to bring back as many students as possible, stressing the importance of masks (which we currently use), physical distancing of at least 6ft (which we currently adhere to), hand washing and respiratory etiquette (integral to our protocols), cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities (Wednesdays and nightly cleaning procedures for us), contact tracing (which we are quite competent with now), and the “podding” of students (which we currently utilize in the 2-day and 4-day and hybrid models). We were hoping for a physical distancing guideline that was less restrictive, but unfortunately, the medical research suggests that the 6ft is necessary to prevent the aerosols from transmitting the virus in indoor spaces. It seems that the document is trying to compel schools that are still in fully remote settings to consider other options. However, we will let each of you make that determination for yourselves. The [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools](#) is located on the CDC website.
2. **Vaccination Update** – We are diligently working with our Allegheny Intermediate Unit, AHN, UPMC, St. Clair, and Heritage Valley health systems to develop an organized and efficient plan to vaccinate anyone in our system that works with students. As a result, a detailed plan has been formulated that includes times, locations, regional clusters of schools, and other pertinent details in order to get the educators in our County vaccinated quickly and efficiently. As many of you are aware, more people were added to the 1A group to ensure that the hospitals were clear. Although this makes sense, it keeps educators in a holding pattern. However, we will be ready and willing once the vaccine is available.
3. **Covid-19 Update** – Allegheny County's numbers are getting better, but we are still in the “substantial” spread category. As you know, this requires us to move to remote instruction intermittently as cases come into the building. We have had a total of 24 cases between students and staff since last March (although there have been additional cases with families of “virtual only” students). Although we would prefer zero cases, we believe that our mitigation efforts have been effective. Furthermore, our health and

safety protocols are such that there has been no transmission in the school. Although this has taken patience and flexibility, on all of our parts, the most important factor is that we are keeping students and families safe. Fortunately, we haven't had to go virtual due to Covid since the holiday season, and we hope this trend continues. We are also hopeful that we will emerge from the "substantial" category (less than 100 cases per 100,000 people and less than a 10% positivity rate across the County) very soon as numbers continue to decline.

4. **Future Educational Plans** – We hope that as the community spread decreases and we continue to become vaccinated, we might be able to consider additional in-person options. Our goal is to continue to carefully bring as many students back into the buildings as we can. Additional layers of safety may allow us to do just that (although we will work directly with the County Health Department to ensure this is done safely, thoughtfully, and effectively). We will keep you in the loop as the situation progresses.
5. **Weather-related Information** – As you know, we have had a number of weather-related issues during the past month. Please know, that when weather events occur, we are up all night with the goal of keeping you and your families safe. We consult with road crews, the transportation company, other schools and Superintendents, and our local Police Departments. Although we are a walking district, many of our families drive their children to school and all of our staff commute daily. Therefore, we need to be sure sidewalks and roads are safe for travel. Please know that we take the safety of the students and staff seriously. That being said, weather is often difficult to predict, and we might not always get it right (but we will certainly try)! Your patience and flexibility is greatly appreciated.
6. **Seniors** – This week, we reached out to Seniors and Senior families to let them know that we are already planning for them. We will work closely with the Senior leadership team and Senior families to make sure that we do EVERYTHING we can to ensure that the end of the year is special, memorable, and FUN! More to come.

Those are the latest updates as of today. We will continue to be diligent about future plans, and continuously focus on the health and safety of all. Please continue to stay happy, peaceful, and safe, and let's hope that this Thursday/Friday and Sunday/Monday snow events don't cause too much havoc. Have a wonderful week.

Sincerely,

The Riverview Administration