Bethany Public School District

Colleen M. Murray, Superintendent of Schools

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Dear BCS School Community,

I am so incredibly grateful for the 47 days of in-person learning we have been able to provide at Bethany Community School (BCS). The success of reopening in-person can be contributed to the efforts of the entire BCS community. Compliance with our mitigation strategies, wearing masks, handwashing, cohorting, home health screening, social distancing, and creative opportunities for outdoor learning have all contributed to our success. It is important that we continue to follow the established protocols to keep the COVID-19 numbers down. Based on Town-level Data, provided weekly by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Town of Bethany is in the yellow zone. For the 2 week period from October 18th to October 31st, the Town of Bethany reports 9.1 positive COVID-19 cases per 100,000, while BCS reports zero positive cases, to date. That being said, as local health officials begin to see a rise in the state metrics, the school district would be remiss if we did not prepare for the possibility of a change in our instructional model.

As you know from the District Reopening Plan, in addition to full in-person, we also planned for hybrid and full distance learning models. The staff and students have been gradually preparing for the possibility of these models through their day-to-day efforts.

To better prepare for these alternative learning models, we will be engaging in pre-planned hybrid and full distance learning days. The outcome of these days will be designed to monitor and adjust to each of these models while we have time to make meaningful changes to our design. We hope these days will equally serve as a time for families to assess their needs. These “practice” days will be held the week prior to Thanksgiving break as noted below:

The revised schedule is as follows:

Monday November 23rd	**Tuesday November 24th**	**Wednesday November 25th**	**Thursday November 26th**	**Friday November 27th**
Hybrid Model Last Names A-K In-person Last Names L-Z Remote	**Hybrid Model** Last Names A-K Remote Last Names L-Z In-person	**Remote Model** All Students Early Dismissal 1:10 pm	No School	No School

Additionally, in consultation with both the Orange Health Department (OHD) and the Quinnipiack Valley Health District (QVHD), the **Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge, and Amity School districts will participate in a week of full remote learning** in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 following the Thanksgiving Holiday Recess, as noted below:

Monday November 30th	Tuesday December 1st	Wednesday December 2nd	Thursday December 3rd	Friday December 4th
Remote Model All Students	**Remote Model** All Students	**Remote Model** All Students Early Dismissal 1:10 pm	**Remote Model** All Students	**Remote Model** All Students

Lunch will continue to be provided during these times. More information will follow.

While this does mean that students will be home for a week, our hope is that this decision will help us to be in the best possible position to keep the school open as we approach the winter months.

According to both the OHD and QVHD public health officials, most of the scientific studies have demonstrated that on average it takes 5–6 days for symptoms to appear after being exposed to a confirmed positive COVID-19 case/person. Therefore, during the week of remote learning, it is important to keep track of the daily symptoms. Families and staff who are traveling out of state are reminded of the Governor's Executive Order 9C and the International Travel Advisory from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Persons traveling to restricted states or internationally are required to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days upon return to Connecticut or present a negative RT-PCR COVID-19 test prior to returning to work/school. Please plan accordingly if your holiday plans include out of state travel.

As a friendly reminder, with the holiday season approaching, please follow mitigation strategies such as physical distancing, hand washing, and avoiding large crowds. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it's important to practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow) and wearing a face covering/mask when unable to keep distance during social gatherings. No doubt the holidays will be different this year, but these practices will assist in the health and safety of our community and in keeping our schools open.

With gratitude,

Colleen M. Murray

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Superintendent