Bethany Public School District

Colleen Murray, Superintendent

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March 5, 2021

Dear BCS Community,

This correspondence serves as an update to the current levels of COVID-19 in the Town of Bethany and in the Bethany Community School (BCS), as well as the instructional model decision for next week. Also included, is information regarding Governor Lamont's announcement which speaks to an ease in COVID-19 restrictions and how this new information might affect BCS planning.

The Department of Health (DPH) continues to report town-level data for the number of new cases per 100,000 population and for the percent test positivity in the following dataset: COVID-19 Case Rate by Town. BCS reports zero positive cases this past week and the Town of Bethany reports 13 positive cases with a rate of 16.9 positive cases per 100,000 for the weeks of February 14th through February 27th. This recent data keeps Bethany in the Red Zone.

The District remains committed to providing in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible while mitigating health risks to students and staff. Based on the most recent COVID-19 metrics for Bethany, and in collaboration with our local health advisors at Quinnipiack Valley Health District (QVHD), **BCS will remain in-person learning for the week of Monday, March 8th**.

New Guidelines

On Thursday, March 4th, Governor Ned Lamont released a Plan to ease some COVID-19 restrictions. With these new guidelines, there will be more opportunities for social gatherings and spring activities. While very exciting, these greater opportunities pose a threat for a possible increase in COVID-19 transmission. Please continue your efforts to reduce transmission by wearing face coverings, social distancing, washing your hands frequently, and reporting illness responsibly.

With April break on the horizon, and many families planning to get away, I will be in contact with QVHD for guidance on how the Bethany Public School District will handle the travel advisory moving forward. At this time, we are not planning to schedule a remote week after April vacation but will reassess as we follow the transmission data over the next few weeks. The new guidance from the Governor offers more flexibility and might provide us with more options for end-of-the-year activities. Mr. Reed-Swale will communicate all plans in his upcoming weekly newsletters and Principal's Coffee Hours. It's just too early to predict what might happen once restrictions are lifted, so we need to remain cautious and flexible with our planning.

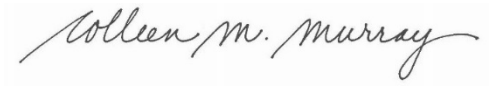
Responsible Reporting

Please continue to contact the school to report absences and contact the school nurse, Cheryl Santore at csantore@bethany-ed.org, BCS: (203) 393-3350 x615 or cell (203) 494-8156, if a student/staff, or a household family member, tests positive for COVID-19 or if student/staff has been identified as a close contact requiring quarantining.

Please do not send your child to school to be assessed by the nurse if they are experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms. By doing so, our chances of controlling transmission and preventing quarantines become challenged.

Thank you to all the staff and families who are working collaboratively with the school to keep everyone safe. The goal of having children attend school, in-person, is only safe when a community works together to control transmission and the spread of the virus. Your ongoing cooperation and responsible reporting is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Colleen M. Murray
Superintendent