



# HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## *Office of the Superintendent*

March 19, 2021

Dear Members of the Holmdel school community:

As we reported in yesterday's note to parents, a significant spike in reported COVID-19 cases at the High School has forced us to suspend in-person learning, cancel or delay our athletic programs, and quarantine almost 100 students and teachers until early April. It has been reported that these cases can be traced to multiple social gatherings that took place over the past weekend that did not follow accepted social distancing guidelines.

While the pandemic is the main culprit, it is also fair to say that we face another challenge--impatience.

We all want the pandemic to end, so we can return to our normal routines. Vaccinations are on the rise, and there are hopeful signs that we will be able to loosen our current restrictions. Just today, the CDC announced it was relaxing social distancing requirements.

But the here and now still requires a degree of vigilance if we want to maintain our commitment to keeping the schools open and our various extracurricular activities in place.

The CDC guidelines continue to recommend that large gatherings be avoided, particularly those in which physical (social) distancing cannot be maintained between people who live in different households. Both now and in November, the spike of COVID-19 positive cases can be attributable to students attending parties. We would ask that as we enter the last marking period of the school year, students avoid those events and gatherings that would increase the risk of getting and spreading COVID-19. This will not only keep our students safe, but it will allow us to keep schools open as we move to a post-pandemic environment. If attendance at a large gathering cannot be avoided, please adhere to CDC guidelines (i.e., wearing a mask, maintaining social distancing, avoid crowded/poorly ventilated indoor spaces, utilize outdoor spaces). These simple steps (especially the elimination of mass gatherings) have been proven to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and will give us the time we need to get everyone vaccinated and move on to a post-pandemic environment.

We thank you for your continued understanding and cooperation as we work to ensure a successful remainder of the 2020-21 school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee Seitz".

Dr. Lee Seitz  
Interim Superintendent