Bethany Public School District

Colleen Murray, Superintendent

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Dear BCS Community,

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CDSE) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) recently published the following documents regarding mask-wearing, Universal Mask Policies in School Buildings and What You Need to Know: COVID-19 Vaccination, Mask-Wearing, and Social Distancing. Per this guidance, students, staff, and visitors, must wear a mask and maintain social distancing at BCS, until further notice.

Your input is requested: As reported last week, all Connecticut school districts must submit a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan to the CSDE by June 23rd. At this time, the District is waiting for further information and guidance from the CSDE and DPH to help develop our school's Plan. A Zoom Open Forum Roundtable discussion has been scheduled for June 1st at 6:30 pm, serving as an opportunity for stakeholder engagement and public comment on the Bethany Plan before it is submitted to the CDSE.

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 <5 positive cases with a rate of <5 positive cases per 100,000 for the weeks of May 2nd through May 15th. This recent data puts Bethany in the Gray 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, May 24, 2021**.

Responsible Reporting

Please continue to contact the school to report absences and contact the BCS Nurses' Office at (203) 393-3350 x615 or Tom Reed-Swale at treed-swale@bethany-ed.org or (860) 933-2381 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. In order to determine an individual's quarantine time and return to school/work date, we must ask questions regarding their exposure which requires your cooperation. Please do not send your child to school to be assessed by the nurse if they are experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms. Please do not give your child fever-reducing medicine and then send them to school. By doing so, our chances of controlling transmission and preventing quarantines become significantly challenged.

There are three weeks left until a well deserved summer break for all. If we all continue to work together, with the goal of keeping our school open and do all we can to keep each other healthy and safe, we will have a successful end to this school year and Finish Strong! Thank you to all the staff and families who are working collaboratively with the school to keep everyone safe. Your ongoing cooperation and responsible reporting is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Colleen M. Murray
Superintendent