

Darien Public Schools - Administrative Offices

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February 5, 2021

Dear Families and Staff,

I hope this message finds your family well. This week started off with an impressive snowfall that required two days of remote learning. Thank you to all of our families and staff for navigating different learning models with impressive skill and grace. When we reflect back on our last year, it is impressive to revisit the new skills we have all learned in our journey to define teaching and learning during a pandemic.

The District's plan to gradually welcome all secondary students back to the building for full in person learning continues to successfully progress. Thoughtfully spaced, incremental increases in student population creates conditions for the monitoring of health and safety data. The next phase of our plan is scheduled for Monday, February 8 when we welcome grade 7 and grade 9 students back to school for in person learning. Grades 6, 10, and 11 will remain in hybrid until Monday, March 1. All Fridays will remain remote for secondary students until Friday, March 5.

The plan remains subject to change and its success continues to rely on your partnership in exercising health and safety practices. As a reminder, given that local indicators continue to trend favorably, it is the District's intent to have in person learning for elementary students; students in grades 7, 8, 9, 12; and, hybrid learning for grades 6, 10, 11 for the week after vacation (February 22-26). We will continue to monitor this situation during our weekly meeting with our health professionals.

Independent Learning for Elementary Students

The [elementary curriculum website](#) has been updated with optional independent work for students. Three week's of Friday afternoon independent learning activities in the areas of reading, writing, math, science, and enrichments are accessible. Please visit this [FAQ](#) if you have questions regarding this optional work. Each grade level's activity list includes a link to a Google Form that directly provides teachers with information regarding completed work.

Athletics

Consistent with recommendations from the CIAC, the Connecticut Department of Public Health and our local health officials, spectators are not permitted into contests to start the season. This applies to events with venues on or off campus. The athletic department is exploring the possibility of livestreaming as many of our contests as possible to allow parents access to their children's contests. We will make every effort to have parents be able to attend senior night events.

Per guidance from the CIAC, any student who has tested positive for Covid will need clearance from their pediatrician to start the *Return to Play Protocol*, before resuming practices/competitions with their team. Additional information and the required form can be accessed from the [District's website](#).

Professional Learning and Tokeneke Make-Up Day

A reminder that our winter recess begins for families next Friday with a full day of professional learning for our staff. Tokeneke families, however, are delayed one day in beginning their holiday due to the required make up of a missed school day that resulted from storm power outages. This make up day is necessary to avoid interference with scheduled vacation days or extending the school year for Tokeneke students. Tokeneke teachers will participate in a half day of professional learning. Professional learning for all elementary staff is necessary on this day so teachers may complete a required educator assessment from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Travel Advisory

*If you plan to travel over February Break, please remember that every Connecticut resident, adult or child who ventures beyond the states of New York, New Jersey or Rhode Island is subject to the CT Travel Advisory. Please do not send your child to school if they have traveled outside of CT, NY, NJ or RI for more than 24 hours, unless they have tested negative for COVID-19 or completed a 10-day quarantine upon their return. Please submit the negative COVID-19 test results directly to your school nurse *prior* to sending your child to school. Also, do not forget to fill out the Connecticut Travel Health Form before returning to Connecticut.*

Gatherings

Social gatherings continue to be the greatest source of positive cases reported in our schools. Please evaluate the necessity of any social gathering. If a gathering must take place, be mindful of all mitigation measures when socializing with those who do not live in your home. Remember to maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance, wear a mask and perform frequent hand hygiene.

Most importantly, if you, or your child(ren), are not feeling well, even with mild symptoms, please remain home and seek the advice of your healthcare provider and testing for COVID-19.

As always, your continued vigilance and partnership in providing the necessary health and safety conditions to keep our community safe are recognized and appreciated. We are looking forward to welcoming back all of our students to in person learning on Monday, March 1st.

Have an enjoyable Super Bowl weekend!

Sincerely,



Dr. Alan Addley, Ed.D
Superintendent