



November 6, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This week, the state issued new guidance and requirements for COVID-19 testing in orange zone schools. We have been working to better understand the requirements and determine if we can secure the necessary licenses, supplies, training, and supervision to conduct testing in our orange zone schools. As required by the state, when we are able to test 100% of our students and staff in a seven-day period, we can then begin the process of reopening schools in the orange zone to the hybrid model. Once opened, the district would have to test at least 25% of the building's population weekly in order to remain open.

We are working with the county to establish COVID testing in our schools as soon as practical. Please understand that the process for a school to become a testing site is extensive. While the district attempts to meet these new testing requirements established by the state, we must continue remote instruction next week while the schools remain in the orange zone. Without implementing this new testing, the only way we can return to in-person hybrid learning without testing is if the Governor designates our region as a green zone. Note that schools in a yellow zone also require testing.

Additionally, yesterday the state Board of Regents cancelled January Regents exams due to the ongoing global pandemic. Our high school students taking courses that include a Regents exam will receive an exemption from the exam as long as they complete and pass the associated course by the end of the first semester. High School students and parents/guardians with questions should contact the student's school counselor, or [click here](#) for frequently-asked questions from the state Education Department. The state has not yet issued any information on grade 3-8 state assessments.

Thank you for your continued support of our children. We will keep you up to date on future information from the state regarding the focus zones and other relevant information. If you have questions, please contact the Main Office of your child's school.

As always, we also thank you for following safety practices to help decrease the effects of COVID-19 on our community by wearing masks, maintaining safe physical distance, washing hands thoroughly and regularly, and avoiding unnecessary outings and contacts.

Sincerely,

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas
Superintendent of Schools