



November 20, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

With several new orders from the PA Department of Health and the holiday season quickly approaching I wanted to communicate what these new mitigation strategies mean for our students and efforts moving forward.

- If any student is planning on traveling outside of the state with their families for any reason (holidays, sports, etc.,) they are required to have a **negative PCR COVID-19 test after their return to the commonwealth**, or to **quarantine for 14 days** upon return to Pennsylvania. The documentation of a negative PCR test must be presented **BEFORE** returning to school.
- Rapid tests are no longer being accepted due to their lack of reliability and the ACHD and PAHD only support the use of a PCR test as a true measure.
- We ask that if a student needs to be quarantined or has a positive test over a weekend or break, please email the school nurse immediately.
- Please remember that testing centers are currently backed up and getting an appointment for a test and receiving results could take several days.
- The new order calls out “cloth face coverings” as the preferred type of masking in the new order. In the past we have allowed plastic shields as an alternative to everyone. Moving forward, we ask that everyone wear some type of cloth face covering. If you have a special medical, physical, or mental condition that prevents you or your child from wearing a mask, then a face shield will be acceptable with proper medical, 504, or IEP documentation. A combination of a mask and a shield would be considered the highest level of mitigation and is certainly encouraged, but not required.

Our goal moving forward is to keep our students in school as long as we can manage while maintaining mitigation measures and safety. Any evidence of school spread or an increase in the number of cases in a particular building could result in a two-week shutdown. We will continue to work with the Allegheny County Health Department and follow their recommendations on all cases. We will always err on the side of safety and not put our students and staff at risk. That said, we also want to be reasonable and rational when making these decisions and not move everyone in the district to remote learning just because other districts choose that path or cases spike in a particular building. We will make decisions using our current building data in conjunction with health department recommendations. Each district is different and has different challenges and supports. We have been very fortunate and successful up to this point.

With a little more vigilance with actions and mitigation outside of school, I know we can be successful and keep our kids in school. **If you are planning on traveling outside the state, please let your school nurse know ASAP so that we can keep an account of those students and determine when they will safely return to school.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael P. Ghilani". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Dr. Michael P. Ghilani
Superintendent of Schools