



RINGGOLD SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent of Schools

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January 15, 2021

Dear Ringgold Family,

I write to inform you regarding our plans for instruction for the week of January 19, 2021.

In August, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Pennsylvania Department of Health provided guidance to schools that focused on percent positivity and county transmission rates. The District has been using that guidance in the considerations for decisions on student return to school campuses. However, on January 7, 2021 the Departments of Education and Health updated those recommendations and encouraged school leaders to consider the return of students to in-person instruction 'as local conditions permit'.

The most recent recommendations include return to school for elementary students at the onset of the second semester. Specifically, the guidance provided for the following:

*"Beginning with the start of the second semester, the Departments recommend public schools in counties with substantial transmission consider returning elementary school students to in-person instruction while secondary school students remain fully remote, provided they follow all applicable orders and safety protocols. Also due to some student populations being disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 response efforts, schools should consider resuming in-person instruction for targeted student populations (i.e. students with disabilities, English Learners, etc.), regardless of the general instructional model they are utilizing. **As always, these recommendations are dependent on local factors including size of the school entity, classroom size, school resources, proportion of staff and students with special needs and underlying health conditions, and the ability to accommodate remote learning with equal access for all students.**"*

Based on this latest information from the Departments of Education and Health, the District plans to recommend a change to the "attestation form". This change will be voted on at the January 20th Board Meeting. Following that vote and submission to PDE, the District plans to resume in person instruction for all students on Monday, January 25th. I recognize that this decision will be met with varied responses as I continue to receive feedback from those who wish to have students back in school immediately, as well as from those who do not wish to have students return to our physical campuses.

~Preparing students today for the challenges of tomorrow ~

As I have previously indicated, we have done our best to continue to follow the changing guidance of the State and local agencies. Even now, we continue to do our best to interpret and follow that guidance even in this instance where the guidance is complex and seems contradictory in some respects. We do however agree with Secretary Levine and Ortega's comments on the importance of having children in school. For that reason, we will continue to implement and adhere to strict mitigation protocols as we return our students to school on January 25th, 2021.

I continue to express my sincere thanks for the manner in which everyone continues to work together during these challenging and changing times. Because of our collective efforts, our children will continue to receive the Ringgold education which remains a hallmark of our graduates.

Sincerely,

Randall Skrinjorich
Superintendent of Schools

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