



Akron Central School District

In Pursuit of Excellence

*Patrick D. McCabe
Superintendent of Schools*

November 19, 2020

Dear ACS Community:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Akron Central School District will shift to fully remote learning for all students effective November 25, 2020. [Our fully Remote Learning Plan can be found here.](#) While it brings great sadness for all of us, this move is necessary as we have reached the point where we no longer have appropriate staffing levels to continue in person learning and maintain critical district operations including the classroom instruction, supervision of students, and other essential functions. The cumulative effect of employee absences due to COVID-19-like symptoms, placement of personnel in quarantine, and recent designation of an Orange Zone in surrounding communities have all added to our current situation.

I know that remote learning is difficult for children and families. It requires far greater support from parents and caregivers than does school-based learning. In addition, younger children require adult supervision which can result in economic hardship for many families. Please reach out to our counselors, social workers, or building administrators if there is anything that you feel we can do to assist you or your child in making this adjustment. We are eager to help in any way that we can.

We have learned many lessons from this past spring and I am grateful to our teachers and administrators for the manner in which they have listened to concerns from families while using their own experiences to make improvements to our remote model. Building principals will provide more details on student learning expectations and the distribution of materials soon. In addition, teachers will set the expectations for remote learning with their children and provide them with quality instruction and support. As a reminder, Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for Tuesday, November 24th 4:30-7:30 and Wednesday, November 25th 8:00-11:30. These will be held virtually. [You can click here to schedule your conference\(s\) if you have not already done so.](#)

The timeline to return to in person learning via the hybrid model will be determined by two key variables. The first is our ability to restore staffing to appropriate levels. We will have a better understanding of this after the Thanksgiving recess. The second variable relates to our ability to perform COVID-19 testing to 20% of the in-person population. The [electronic consent form can be found on our website](#) and a hard copy has been mailed home. I ask that you complete the electronic or paper version as soon as possible. We continue to explore all options to attain our Limited Service Laboratory registration so that we may order the [BinaxNow Covid-19 Rapid](#) and conduct testing in school.

As we experience the next phase of this challenge together, I will continue to work with public health officials and will provide you with frequent updates regarding the status of our return to in-person learning. We have tentatively set Monday, December 7, 2020 as the return date for in person learning. Again, we will keep you informed of any changes over the coming days.

I want to close with expressing my sincere appreciation for everything that our students, faculty, staff and parents have done to support the Akron Central School District community over the recent weeks and months. We have completely reimagined education and implemented teaching and learning strategies that would have been considered impossible just months ago.

As a community, we have faithfully followed the requirements of masking, physical distancing, hand hygiene, monitoring of symptoms and all of the other measures that we have taken to ensure that school is a safe place to learn and work. I am confident that we will return to in-person learning just as safely.

Sincerely,

Patrick D. McCabe
Superintendent of Schools