



Akron Central School District

In Pursuit of Excellence

*Patrick D. McCabe
Superintendent of Schools*

December 21, 2020

Dear Akron Students, Families, and Staff:

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to update you on the return to in-person learning via the hybrid model. But first, I would like to thank all of our teachers, students and families for the commitment to our educational program while we have been fully remote. I have heard a number of positive comments about the consistency that this approach has provided to students, families and staff. Once again, we have shown that the success of our students' experience is the result of the strong school and home partnership that we have here in Akron.

As you know, the decision to utilize the fully remote learning model was in response to insufficient staffing levels and evidence of increased COVID-19 positivity rates within Erie County and our community. I am pleased to report that our staffing levels have improved significantly while the 7-day rolling average within Erie County and our Zone has been on a downward trend. On a related matter, the revised contact tracing guidelines, which includes the elimination of the "60-minutes rule" will significantly reduce the number of children and staff that are placed in quarantine. It is worth noting in her correspondence to area superintendents, ECDOH Commissioner Gale Burstein stated that the "...decision to do this was based on three months and hundreds of case investigations within schools, which have shown that student-to-student transmission is incredibly rare."

In light of these factors, we intend to return to the hybrid model of instruction on January 4, 2021. Please know that we will always make decisions that are best for our students and staff and that we will closely monitor all factors over the coming weeks and months.

As a professional organization we are constantly striving to improve. We have discovered a lot over the past two weeks and will continue to make adjustments to instructional programming and delivery while in the hybrid model in an effort to maximize student engagement and learning.

As the end of the calendar year draws to a close, there is reason to look back and take pride in what we have accomplished despite the many challenges. We have successfully managed to keep our students safe, involve them in meaningful learning, and have helped them to discover that resiliency and a positive spirit are essential life skills.

Our goal is to educate the "whole child" and sometimes the greatest opportunities for learning, creativity, and self-discovery are borne out of challenges and setbacks. It is with that in mind, that I ask our students to consider the new calendar year as a new opportunity to commit themselves to their school work and their own personal growth. I truly believe that each student at ACS is capable of great things in the new year. Together we can help them pursue excellence.

Finally, I wish to extend my best wishes for peace, prosperity and good health to you and your families this holiday season.

Sincerely,
Patrick D. McCabe
Superintendent of Schools

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