



SALMON RIVER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dr. Stanley Harper
Superintendent

Angela Robert
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

December 2, 2020

Dear Salmon River Central School District Parents and Guardians, Staff and Community Members,

In consultation with the Franklin County Department of Health, the Franklin Essex Hamilton BOCES and several of its component school districts, including Salmon River, I have made the decision to return students to in-person instruction. Salmon River students who previously attended class in-person prior to November 12th will return to in-person instruction starting Tuesday December 8, 2020. Since our decision to move to remote instruction in November, the landscape in our area has changed. [Studies and data have shown](#) that schools are usually safer than the general community. Many Government officials have embraced that data and are [advocating for students to stay in school](#) as much as possible.

One of the major reasons the county asked schools to pause in-person learning was because there wasn't enough public health staff to be able to help if Franklin County hit the state's yellow zone threshold. At the time, a yellow zone designation meant that schools had to test 20% of staff and students every week. Since then, the state has relaxed those protocols, only requiring schools to test 20% of staff and students once over a two-week period. No additional testing will be required as long as the result of the testing shows the infection rate to be lower than the surrounding community.

Over the last few weeks, I have worked with our team to create a plan for testing 20% of our staff and students if required. If the County goes into a yellow zone and students and staff need to be tested, they won't have to get the deep nasal swabs that many have come to associate with COVID-19 testing. The testing equipment the county has on hand for schools are rapid tests that only require a shallow swab right inside the nostril, and results are ready in about 15 minutes.

Moving forward, we will plan to shift to remote learning on a case-by-case basis. We will start with closing individual classrooms that are impacted, then go on to buildings if necessary, and then to district wide. Data has shown that focused isolation has been effective in containing the spread of COVID-19 in schools. Decisions will be made based on the specific circumstances, which can vary widely across the District. Salmon River doesn't plan to pause in-person learning again as a whole, unless there is a mandate from the county, state or the Governor's Executive Orders.

I am proud of our community for taking steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Infection rates are once again under control, and this success means that students can get back to their preferred way of learning.

I am asking you to follow the basic guidelines to prevent COVID-19:

- Stay home whenever possible
- Stay 6 feet away from people from outside the household
- Wear a mask in public
- Wash hands regularly with soap and water
- Don't host or attend large gatherings

Please join us in doing everything that we can do to stop the COVID-19 spread. The pandemic has been a long, hard road already, but our aim is that everyone will help us keep our kids in school where they belong.

We appreciate all that every one has done so far to get us through the pandemic, and we appreciate everything you will do to help keep yourself and family healthy and safe as we move forward.

With appreciation,

Dr. Stanley Harper