



EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

October 21, 2020

RE: Recent Rise in COVID-19 Cases in Community and Implications for Schools

Dear Eastern Upper Peninsula School Community:

We are seeing coronavirus cases rise in our region at some alarming rates. As the superintendents that represent our region, we want to speak with you about this. We want to thank you for all the patience that you have shown during these difficult times. Being flexible and willing to work with us during this pandemic has been integral in keeping our schools and students safe. Unfortunately, the collective efforts that have been put forth so far have not slowed the community spread of coronavirus and we must do more.

Public health experts report significant increases in positive cases across our state and region in recent weeks. Health officials cite that the rise in cases is largely due to a lack of safe practices -- mainly distancing and mask wearing -- in social settings and community gatherings. If cases continue to trend upwards, County Health Departments warn schools may be forced to implement additional restrictions to prevent continued infections. Restrictions may include cancellation, or other mitigation efforts, of extracurricular activities like athletics, band, choir and drama. As a worst case scenario, schools may be asked to shift to a distance learning instructional model either periodically or for an extended period of time until cases decline.

While safety continues to remain our number one priority in our schools, we also acknowledge the important role schools serve for our community. Our schools are essential for meeting the social, emotional, academic and physical needs of all of our students and families and we must do everything in our power to keep our schools safe and keep them open.

Since the beginning, there have been practices that have been stressed by our local health department and we are asking that we take a community-wide focus on these again in order to help mitigate the spread of coronavirus in our communities and keep our school doors open to face-to-face learning. Those practices are:

- Staying home when you are sick
- Practice the 3 Ws:
 - o Wear a mask covering your nose and mouth
 - o Watch your distance
 - o Wash your hands (with soap and water for at least 20 seconds)
- Covering coughs and sneezes and properly disposing of tissues; wash or sanitize hands after.

Together, we can slow the spread of coronavirus. On behalf of the students and communities we serve, we thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Ms. Angie McArthur, Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District

Mr. Brian Reattoir, Brimley Area Schools

Mr. Bill Henry, Consolidated Community School Services

Mr. Robert Vaught, DeTour Area Schools/DATA

Mr. Joshua Reed, Engadine Consolidated Schools

Dr. Theresa Kallstrom, JKL Bahweting Anishnabe PSA

Mrs. Susie Schlehuder, Lake Superior Academy

Mr. Bob Lohff, Les Cheneaux Community Schools

Ms. Amy Peterson, Mackinac Island Public School

Mrs. Amy Lester, Moran Township School

Ms. Stephanie Vittitow, Ojibwe Charter School

Ms. Angela Nettleton, Pickford Public Schools

Mr. Mark Pavloski, Rudyard Area Schools

Mr. Don Gustafson, St. Ignace Area Schools

Dr. Tim Hall, Sault Ste. Marie Area Public Schools

Mrs. Stacy Price, Tahquamenon Area Schools

Mrs. Rachel Bommarito, Three Lakes Academy

Mr. Tom McKee, Whitefish Township Comm. Schools