



## CENTRAL SQUARE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent

December 30, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

While the District absolutely values in-person learning, especially for our students that require the most support (our very young students and our students receiving special education services), we have listened to the local Health Departments and elected officials that have predicted a massive spike in the number of COVID-19 cases and mandatory quarantines that follow, and **we are pausing in-person learning for PreK-12<sup>th</sup> grade students starting January 4 through Friday, January 15**. In-person learning will resume on Tuesday, January 19, as Monday, January 18 is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and school is not in session.

- We will still allow our middle school and high school students that have poor or no Internet connection at home to be bused to CSMS and PVM High School each day where they will continue to be supervised by staff in our libraries and other large spaces. **If your elementary child has poor or no Internet connection at home, please contact your child's principal as soon as you can** so accommodations can be made for your child during the pause to in-person learning.
- We were just notified today that CiTi BOCES is also pausing ALL of their in-person learning for ALL BOCES programs through January 15, as well, and will resume in-person learning on January 19. **We will continue to transport our students to any out of District program that is not a BOCES run program.**
- All sports, music/band, and extracurricular activities are also postponed **starting January 4 through January 15** because when school districts go on a pause such as this, we are not allowed to run sports or any extracurricular activities. The Governor has yet to decide on whether or not he will allow high risk winter sports to take place this year.

We are hoping that recent history repeats itself and the increase spike in COVID-19 cases and mandatory quarantines of students and staff following Halloween and the massive spike following Thanksgiving recess dissipates during the two weeks following our current holiday recess. By pausing our in-person learning during these two weeks, we will absolutely avoid hundreds of student and staff quarantines. When a teacher is in mandatory quarantine they are forced to deliver their remote instruction from home instead of from their classroom, which means that in some cases the Internet connection is not as strong as the District's Internet connectivity, resulting in issues with distance learning for our students. We also want to avoid what took place following Thanksgiving recess where the Health Department was contacting us midday informing us that we had several staff members and students that were now considered "close contacts" and they had to quarantine immediately. This meant that without notice, parents had to pick their children up at school and staff members had to also leave immediately, and we had to scramble to find substitute teachers since those classrooms had in-person students. **All districts are struggling to secure substitute teachers and substitute bus drivers at this point.**

We are fully committed to providing our students with the best educational program for the remainder of the school year. We realize that while this decision will be a relief for many, it will also frustrate many parents that want more in-person learning for their children. We are hoping that this temporary pause to in-person learning will help us avoid hundreds of mandatory quarantines so we can eventually resume our in-person learning schedule.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Colabufo, Superintendent