



December 22, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As the district works to reopen our schools to hybrid instruction, we wish to update all parents and guardians on some important items. Note that there is information for 5-12 grade, PreK-4 grade, and all PreK-12 families below.

Reopening Information for Grade 5-12 Families:

- **Hybrid Instruction Reopening Dates.** On Friday we announced that the High School will reopen to hybrid instruction on Monday, January 4. Today we have finalized a plan for the **Intermediate and Middle schools to reopen to hybrid learning on Thursday, January 7.** Please note that these dates remain tentative. If the governor makes changes to the micro-cluster zones or our region's situation changes, we would have to readjust our plan.
- **Survey and Testing Permission Form.** If your child is scheduled for hybrid instruction, we will need your response to our survey. If your child will be returning to in-person instruction, we also need a signed testing permission form. We will be re-sending the survey link and testing permission form today, along with some suggestions for those having difficulty completing the fillable .pdf document.
- **Extra-Curricular/Athletics.** Once hybrid instruction resumes, certain extra-curricular activities and sports will be able to resume for grades 7-12, as long as safety precautions are met. Please look for more information from the Athletic Department on the resumption of sports deemed 'low-risk' by the state.

For PreK-4 Parents/Guardians:

- **Parent/Teacher Conferences for Center Street, Gardner Road, and Ridge Road.** The three schools have rescheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences to **January 26, 27, and 29.** These days will be half days of instruction for your children. Your child's teacher will be in touch with you about the day and time for your virtual conference.

For All Parents/Guardians:

- **Health Surveys.** When our schools are open to hybrid instruction, we remind all parents/guardians of hybrid instruction students to complete the health survey online each morning your child attends school. Email reminders for hybrid instruction students in grades 5-12 will resume January 4. If you are not getting the reminder emails, please contact your school.
- **State Micro-Cluster Zones and Continued Safety Precautions.** We ask everyone to keep in mind that once our schools reopen to hybrid instruction, our ability to remain open is at the direction of the state. If at any time, the state changes its requirements for schools and/or micro-cluster zones, we must align our schools with those changes. We will keep families informed of any changes. Families can assist by continuing to practice safety precautions of avoiding gatherings, especially during the holidays, wearing masks when needing to leave home, and washing hands thoroughly and often. Together we can keep our schools open.

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- **Procedure for Positive Cases/Direct Contacts.** Our goal is to keep our schools open to hybrid learning. If a staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19, we will begin contact tracing immediately so that we can inform direct contacts of the situation. We will evaluate each situation and determine if the tracing indicates that the school can remain open or should temporarily go to remote learning. We will contact parents of any student who is determined to be a direct contact of a positive case.
- **Cohort In-Person Days.** The recent winter weather event affected the number of in-person days for PreK-4 students on hybrid instruction. Any future weather events or other closings will likely do the same. As a result, once we move past the winter months, we will determine if changes are needed to balance the number of in-person days for each cohort.
- **Board of Education Meetings.** Our Board of Education will look at adjusting the public comment section of their meetings after the holiday break. The plan is to modify the traditional comment process, adding in safety protocols. Individuals who wish to make a comment will be able to appear before the board via zoom link at a location to be determined. The district will share further information once it is finalized.

On behalf of everyone in the Horseheads Central School District, I wish each and every one of you a safe, happy holiday season. Together, we will continue to move through this pandemic, and hopefully see improvement as we move into 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas J. Douglas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "D".

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas
Superintendent of Schools