



December 3, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians of Students at Center Street, Gardner Road, and Ridge Road:

This communication includes important information for the reopening of our three PreK-4 schools to hybrid learning. Our plan is to reopen Center Street, Gardner Road, and Ridge Road beginning with Cohort A on December 14. Once reopened, the schools' hybrid/remote instructional model will include changes in daily ELA and math instruction. Please look for more information from your school.

Below is information regarding the requirements for reopening these three buildings.

- **State Requirements:** New state regulations require that in order for schools in the orange micro-cluster zone to reopen to hybrid learning, the schools must test students and staff in the building weekly, on a schedule that results in 20% of individuals tested each month. (This does not affect students on remote instruction. We are sharing this information with parents/guardians of all PreK-4 students so that everyone has the information.)
- **Consent to Test:** If your student is on hybrid instruction, your student must be tested for the state's ongoing requirements for schools in the orange zone. In order for students to be tested in school, we must have parent/guardian permission. Please [click here](#) for the mandatory permission form. **We ask that parents/guardians print and complete the form and send it with their child on the first day they return to school.** If you are unable to print at home, please contact your school office and they will help you get the form.
- Please note that if you do not wish to consent to testing for your child, your child must remain in remote instruction. If you do not wish for your child to be tested and therefore choose to keep your child in remote instruction, please contact your school office to confirm immediately so that our teachers can plan accordingly.
- **BinaxNOW Test:** The mandatory tests will be performed by trained personnel and require only the lower nasal cavity to be swabbed - the BinaxNOW test we explained in prior communications. Results will be available within 15 minutes. Please [click here](#) for a video simulation of the test to know what to expect. Please note that individuals with symptoms cannot take this rapid test.
- **Staywell Health Survey:** We will be turning on our Staywell health survey reminder emails for Center Street, Gardner Road, and Ridge Road hybrid learning students beginning December 7. As a reminder, if you answer "yes" for your child to any question on this survey, your child must stay at home until our school nurse and/or the Chemung County Department of Health provides procedures for the student to return to school. Our safety protocols will be in place when our schools reopen. Please [click here](#) for that information.

We remind all families that state requirements can change at any time, as they did this week, so please continue to check your emails and listen to our district-wide phone calls for any updates. We also remind you that staffing levels affect schools' ability to remain in the hybrid format. If we are unable to staff certain classrooms or bus runs due to quarantine/isolation orders, we will need to move specific classrooms to remote instruction or cancel specific bus runs temporarily.

Thank you for your continued cooperation as we work to provide in-person learning for students and a safe learning environment for our entire school community. As always, and especially during this holiday season, we remind everyone to continue with safety precautions of wearing masks, maintaining safe distance, washing hands thoroughly and often, and avoiding unnecessary outings, large gatherings, and other contacts. This will certainly help Horseheads Schools remain open.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact your school office.

Sincerely,

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas, Superintendent of Schools