



November 4, 2020

Dear RCS Families,

On Thursday, Nov. 5, Rochester Community Schools will be returning to an enhanced remote learning environment due to the current Oakland County Health Division (OCHD) risk level determination.

All students enrolled in our transitional kindergarten through 12th grade (TK-12) in-person learning, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), and Adult Transition Program and Services (ATPS) can plan to participate in temporary remote learning at this time. In-person enrichment programs will be paused until in-person learning resumes. Pre-K and school-age care programs will be paused through Friday, Nov. 6, for further evaluation.

TK-12, ECSE, and ATPS students will follow an enhanced version of the remote learning schedule established at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year until at least Nov. 27. During this time, we will be continuously re-evaluating our options, which may include providing in-person opportunities for some of our special populations and youngest learners.

The temporary remote learning schedule will now feature live/synchronous instruction with a teacher five days per week. Synchronous learning will replace wellness Wednesdays at the secondary level. Schedules are attached for your convenience. The Thanksgiving holiday will still be observed from Nov. 25-27.

[Click here for the RCS elementary remote schedule .pdf](#)

[Click here for the RCS secondary remote schedule .pdf](#)

Breakfast and lunch meals will continue to be distributed on Wednesdays from a student's home school. Those students attending the Dr. John M. Schultz Educational Campus will pick up meals at Rochester High School.

Throughout the pandemic, we have continued to reinforce that the safety of our students, staff and families is our priority. Decisions about in-person or remote learning environments are taken seriously. As you may be aware, COVID-19 cases across the state and the county are growing exponentially.

The current 7-day case average from Oct. 30 – Nov. 3 for Oakland County is currently 293.1. On Oct. 7, the OCHD reported 41 cases per million on a 7-day average. On Nov. 3, the OCHD reported 293 cases per million on a 7-day average. This represents an increase of nearly 615 percent.

When making the determination for remote or in-person learning, Rochester Community Schools follows guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the OCHD.

The OCHD assesses the learning modalities based on official phases of the MI Safe Start plan; identifies the county risk determination using the County Risk Indicator and other epidemiologic data; and works with school districts to determine building and district spread

indicators. School districts then work to adjust educational methodologies (e.g., in-person, hybrid, or remote) based on the OCHD Guidance for In-person Instruction.

[Click here for the OCHD Guidance for In-person Instruction.png](#)

Currently, Oakland County Schools are at risk level E, which is defined as either more than 150 cases per million or a 20 percent positivity rate.

In level E, if there are no cases in a building, the MDHHS and OCHD advise pausing in-person instruction for 14 days districtwide. If there are known cases in a building with or without ongoing transmission, the guidance is to consider remote instruction districtwide.

When we introduced the short-term hybrid learning model by cohorts last month, we were optimistic that mitigation measures across the state would slow the spread of COVID-19 and enable our children to return to full-time, in-person learning, which has always been our goal. Unfortunately, as the number of COVID-19 cases continues to climb, guidance from the OCHD indicates that we must reverse direction and take additional measures to keep our school community safe. This includes not only providing for the health and well-being of our students, but also for our teachers, administrators, and support staff.

Keeping our teams healthy is critical to preserve instructional delivery. As our community is aware, districts across the state are experiencing a shortage of substitute teachers.

As of Nov. 4, RCS has 20 active cases, 3 probable cases, 174 quarantined students and staff, and 17 individuals who are symptomatic. In total since Oct. 4, RCS has had 37 confirmed student COVID-19 cases and approximately 20 staff cases.

It is important to note that 21 percent of our TK–12th-grade students attend the RCS Virtual Campus. Although their schooling is not impacted by the changing public health conditions, there may be a shift in class times. We anticipate this being a small group of students. Notifications will be sent to those students who are impacted by the end of the week.

We recognize that our families may be dealing with this pandemic in very different ways and that the decision to transition back to temporary remote learning may provide some people with a sense of relief, while others will be extremely disappointed. We respect the differences of opinions; however, we remain committed to following the guidance of our public health experts.

Looking ahead, it is evident that we cannot predict the future; but we do know this, regardless of the mode of instruction, if we work together, we can continue to do great things for our students.

If our families have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to reach out to your building administrator or use the Talk to RCS feature on our website at www.rochester.k12.mi.us.

Sincerely,

Robert Shaner, Ph.D.

Superintendent