



November 11, 2020

Dear Center Cass Parents and Guardians –

First and foremost, I would like to take a moment to thank our Veterans for their service, courage, and sacrifice. Without those on guard to protect our lives and protect those we love, none of us would be enjoying the most basic of freedoms.

At last night’s Board of Education meeting, I shared the most recent COVID-19 Data from:

State - <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countyschool?county=Dupage>

County - https://www.dupagehealth.org/DocumentCenter/View/4237/Dupage-County-COVID-19-School-Metrics_Week-44-Report_Nov062020_Final

County/Local - <https://www.dupagehealth.org/610/Dupage-County-COVID-19-Dashboard> (using our three zip codes of 60516, 60517, 60561)

Local - http://covid-dashboard.fsm.northwestern.edu/?fbclid=IwAR3KXK0A0YOPfPN1OjIXe0gobWxbW9hLESBppMPX_1pTQ_uFGHofjzE16s

In August, we used the data sources above, as well as the most current research and guidelines to make the decision to offer a dual educational model, allowing for parental choice of either in-person learning or remote learning. Educationally, offering a dual platform was the right thing to do. From a safety perspective, COVID-19 data supported a safe in-person schooling experience. The data supported in-person learning until late October, when positivity rates and cases started to trend up within D66 relevant areas. We notified our employees and community that if the trend did not reverse, D66 would need to take an Adaptive Pause. Within the last week, all COVID-19 metrics have increased significantly at the county, local, and school level, prompting the recommendation to the Board of Education to take an Adaptive Pause. At last night’s Board of Education meeting, the Board approved the Adaptive Pause. As of this communication, **the Adaptive Pause will begin at the close of the school day on Friday, November 20th**. This means all students will be learning remotely **from Monday, November 23rd until at least Tuesday, January 19th**. With that said, if positive COVID-19 cases continue to increase inside D66 schools, I will recommend we begin the Adaptive Pause earlier.

Today we were notified of three new cases (20, 21, 22) inside District 66 schools. Although all three cases are non-related, in different cohorts, and a mix between in-person and remote learning, the trend is concerning. Although we would prefer to have zero cases, the D66 students, parents, and employees have overall done an excellent job of following the 3 W’s. The spike in D66 cases the last two weeks has our attention, and **we must double down our efforts** to combat the rise in community transmission. If we all are mindful of the 3 W’s, we can finish the first Trimester in our blended model for our students!

Parents, employees, and students have done their best during in-person and remote learning. Each of us individually and collectively were not perfect and made mistakes, but we learned from them and have grown as individuals. Although we have been planning for a shift to full remote, the beginning of full remote may not be perfect either. Please communicate your concerns and successes with us, so we can ensure what works continues, and what isn’t working can be addressed. Our tentative return date to In-Person learning will be Tuesday, January 19th. If data does not support a safe return at that time, we will extend the Pause until it is safe. We are committed to in-person learning and look forward to having students in-person when conditions improve. In January we will survey parents and you will again have a choice between in-person and remote learning. Both are acceptable learning platforms for the school year and we respect the decision you make for you and your family. Thank you for your perseverance, understanding, grace, partnership, and support as we navigate to remote learning for all.

Andrew S. Wise, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools for D66