

February 12, 2021

Dear Garden City School Community,

As we conclude the week and begin our mid-year recess, I want to thank our students, staff and parents for remaining flexible and understanding over the course of the past several months. I appreciate your continued willingness to adapt to the changes that have been necessary to keep our schools open and safe. This means occasionally shifting to remote learning, as we did this past week with the junior class in order to conduct our contact tracing investigation with the Department of Health.

Our 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders enjoyed their first full week in our buildings. They transitioned very well and we enjoyed having them back full time. We are currently on schedule to welcome grades 8 and 11 back to full-time, in-person instruction on February 24<sup>th</sup>, and grades 7, 9 and 10 will follow on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The success of this plan is dependent on our community's vigilance and cooperation in adhering to all health and safety precautions.

Now that we are transitioning our students back to full time, in-person instruction, we may need to make adjustments to the current every other day hybrid model of instruction. While our instructional staff has done a tremendous job adapting to all of the changes over the past year, the every other day in-person learning option appears to be compromising the educational learning experiences for all students. This consideration will be discussed at our next BOE meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Another change we are considering is moving Stewart's 5<sup>th</sup> grade students back to their home school. As this is in its initial planning phase, additional information will be shared with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Stewart parents in the coming days.

Some families may be traveling over the coming break and we wanted to take a moment to remind everyone that it is important to remain vigilant in minimizing the spread of COVID-19. If you are planning to travel during the upcoming February break, please keep in mind that travel advisories from New York State and the Centers for Disease Control are still in place. Here is link to the travel advisory: [New York State Travel Advisory Guidelines](#)

**We ask that you use this form during school closure to inform the district of positive COVID-19 cases- [Garden City Schools COVID-19 Reporting Form](#)** . This form is also located on our district website under COVID-19 Resources.

This week, we had 116 high school students who needed to quarantine based on positive cases within our school. This number does not include siblings of those positive cases who will need to quarantine as well. As I shared with you yesterday, many of the cases from the high school stemmed from a gathering over the weekend outside of school. As I have stressed previously, our actions outside the school day have a direct impact on our schools and our ability to stay open for in-person instruction. Since I wrote to you yesterday, we have learned of six additional students who have tested positive for COVID-19:

- High School - 4 students (all from 11<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Middle School - 1 student
- Locust School - 1 student

It is important that we all continue to do our part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the safety and well-being of our schools and community.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to your building administration.

I hope you have a wonderful break.

Sincerely,

*Kusum*

Kusum Sinha, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools