

12/18/2020

Good Evening Parents,

This week marked the first snow day of the season and we are quickly approaching the December vacation. There are only a few updates to share with you and I want to take an opportunity to thank you for your continued support, understanding, and flexibility. In the midst of the many challenges that this pandemic has presented is an overwhelming sense of support, commitment and engagement on the part of our educators, parents, and students. This is truly remarkable.

From the Covid-19 Coordinator:

Secretary of Education Dan French announced today that despite the increase in Covid positivity in the community, which is about 2.3%, the statewide covid testing in schools continues to show a low positivity rate of about 1%. He also described that despite Covid increases in the community, the number of schools able to continue their in person learning, whether full time or hybrid has remained stable. WSESU schedule is considered a hybrid program. The conclusion is that our social distancing, mask wearing, cleaning, and daily screenings are working to decrease risk of infection for our students and staff.

Snow days, Delays, and Remote Learning - I shared earlier this week that we will be using the days built into our school calendar in the event of a weather related closure. Once we have reached that threshold, we will transition to asynchronous remote learning. Today, I called for all schools to be delayed by two hours, including remote learning. The reason for this is to ensure that those staff that use our schools to conduct remote learning are able to arrive safely. It also provides a measure of simplicity and removes one more complication to determine.

Second Semester Bus Survey - As with the fall semester, families must complete a bus survey in order to be assigned to a bus. All those who live within a transportation eligible zone will be provided with a seat but this survey must be completed in order to do so. The link to that survey is [here](#) as well as in the information distributed explaining the school models. This survey is due January 6th, 2021.

Remote learning week, January 4th - 8th - As I shared the last two weeks, we will be fully remote the week upon our return from the December vacation. This is not directly connected to the threat of the virus. More specifically, as we continue to ask questions about multi-family gatherings on our screening tool, it is important that we create conditions that encourage honesty and accuracy in reporting from all building occupants. We also must be able to safely staff our schools. The number of religious and family festivities at this time of the year create a challenge to this and this decision was made out of an abundance of caution. We further wanted to inform families and staff earlier so they can plan as necessary.

Health Department Link - The Vermont Department of Health has information related to COVID-19 vaccine [here](#). There is not a concrete timeline yet but the site does provide some basic information.

During the vacation week, access to our schools will be limited. Our school staff has worked incredibly hard since the initial transition to remote learning last March and they have earned a well-deserved break to relax, recuperate, and rejuvenate. As such, emails and calls made to schools may take a little longer to be returned. Your understanding is appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support.

Have a great weekend,

Andy
Andrew Skarzynski
Superintendent of Schools
Windham Southeast Supervisory Union