

Parent Update 2/5/2021

Good Afternoon Parents,

As with every week, I hope this finds you well. Our second semester was interrupted ever so briefly by a winter storm but our schools and students were able to quickly resume teaching and learning on Wednesday without missing a beat. This fast turnaround is reflective of how adept our students and staff are in adjusting, adapting, and responding to changing circumstances. As we conclude our eleventh month of operating in the pandemic, it is important to note that we have grown in our capacity to meet the needs of our students, staff, and families. We are certainly not in ideal conditions but we must allow ourselves the grace, wisdom, and understanding to recognize this and that everyone is working with the best of intentions.

I do not have a significant amount of news to share this week. I reported last week that we have transitioned well into our second semester. BUHS is continuing to develop plans to return students to school for two days a week of in-person instruction and we are anticipating that Dummerston and Putney will be increasing the number of days of in-person instruction for students in seventh and eighth grade after the February break.

We are still continuing to monitor the Department of Health, CDC, and Agency of Education and are remaining remote ready. We must remain vigilant and consistent in applying our health protocols and our mitigation efforts. In the event of a need arising, we will adjust our format of instruction. We have been reporting our positive COVID cases on our dashboard and will be updating it to reflect WSESU - Other to indicate locations that are not direct school or classroom environments. This week there was only one reported positive case in our district; this case was not in a school.

Winter sports competitions are starting again. More information will be available for high school sports shortly to describe the parameters for games starting as early as February 12th.

From the Department of Health:

Watch the Super Bowl Safely

If you're planning to watch the Super Bowl this Sunday, remember: it's safest to celebrate with the people you live with.

Check out some of the [CDC's tips](#) -- like hosting a virtual watch party or starting a text group with other fans to chat while you watch. Make your own special game-day apps and snacks, or get take-out food to enjoy with those you live with (Bonus: supports your local food establishments!).

Gathering with people from outside your own household increases the chances of spreading of COVID-19, especially if you're indoors, close together, and eating

or drinking without masks. Many cases and several outbreaks started with get togethers.

As Dr. Anthony Fauci put it on ABC's "Good Morning America": "You don't want parties with people that you haven't had much contact with. You just don't know if they're infected. So as difficult as that is, at least this time around, just lay low and cool it."

So, root for your favorite team, debate the best commercial, and enjoy the game safely!

New on healthvermont.gov

Since the beginning of the pandemic, 29% of Vermont's long-term care facilities (LTCF) have had at least one case of COVID-19. Outbreaks have been experienced by 17% of our long-term care facilities. These outbreaks are defined as a situation where two or more residents or staff members with COVID-19 have known connections to each other in the facility setting.

See our new report [COVID-19 in long-term care facilities](#) to learn more, including how the Health Department works with these facilities to prepare for and prevent COVID-19. This report will be updated every Tuesday [on our website](#).

Additional Resources About Vaccination and More

Find answers to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine from the CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html.

Get Vermont-specific information in our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard: healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccine-data.

Sign up for [the COVID-19 Weekly Email Update](#).

Have a wonderful weekend,

Andy

Andrew Skarzynski
Superintendent of Schools

Windham Southeast Supervisory Union