



PLATTSBURGH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jay Lebrun

Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Hornet Parents:

This feels like a good time for a parent update, because there is no immediate news/situation to report, but the likelihood of developments in the near future seems high. I apologize for the length of this communication, but I think you will find these thoughts useful.

Faculty, staff, students, and parents all deserve incredible thanks and congratulations for seeing us into our third week of school. There aren't enough superlatives to properly recognize this accomplishment. Though it would be nice and comforting to think that we might now ride the established routine through the coming weeks and months, developments in nearby districts reinforce that predictability and routine just aren't luxuries associated with the COVID virus.

It seems unavoidable that the virus will present within our immediate school community (ie. with students, faculty, or staff) at some point. Acknowledging this eventuality and preparing ourselves (even if just mentally) will surely make for a smoother, more measured reaction when this occurs.

Obviously, the immediate reaction to a confirmed COVID case amongst students or faculty/staff will be to close the building(s), transition to fully-remote instruction, and make subsequent decisions based on the circumstances. For instance, we can't anticipate whether all or some of our buildings would need to close, as we can't predict how broad the exposure might be. Similarly, we can't predict the duration of any closure and move to fully-remote instruction, as this will largely be driven by the breadth of the required contact tracing, the time necessary to complete such, and the time required for test results to be returned. Regardless of the circumstances of a possible confirmed COVID case, we will seek and defer to guidance from the Clinton County Public Health Department.

As always, our best strategy to avoid or delay the virus will be to continue with best hygiene and screening practices. Compliance with our distancing and mask-wearing protocols has been exceptional. The small class sizes created by our hybrid mode of delivery have been comforting and have facilitated distancing. I ask again that we all remain resolute with regards to these COVID practices.

In keeping with the fluidity of the situation, the State guidance with regards to COVID continues to evolve. Our district's medical staff have worked tirelessly to interpret and

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apply this guidance, and at times, some of these protocols may seem rigid. Please understand that the enforcement of these strategies (some of which are admittedly inconvenient and cumbersome) serve the ultimate purpose of protecting our students, faculty and staff. I recognize that COVID-19 shares symptoms with many other, more benign ailments such as seasonal allergies, and there is no doubt that some students who are not infected may be removed from the school setting and directed to their primary care provider because of coincidental symptomology. I thank you for enduring these inconveniences and for recognizing the importance of caution as we defend against this virus.

Despite a successful reopening, I caution that we may still be in the 'calm before the storm'. If and when the virus 'cracks' our hygiene defenses and emerges in our building(s), flexibility will be key. Our reopening plan outlined the goal of 'pivoting' between modes of delivery overnight, and this level of adaptability may indeed be necessary. I hope not to have to announce a confirmed COVID case within our district, but it would appear as though this might be all school districts' fate, and if so, I look forward to our continued partnership in navigating that situation.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Lebrun", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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