



Olga Hugelmeyer
Superintendent of Schools

January 25, 2021

Dear Elizabeth Public Schools Learning Community,

I hope this communication reaches you in good health as we enter the new year with optimism of reopening our schools during the 2020-2021 school year.


Our optimism is met with the great responsibility for reopening schools safely by exceeding minimum expectations to put health and safety first for all members of our learning community. Per the State of New Jersey website, the current positivity rate for Northern New Jersey is 13.0% and the New Jersey overall positivity rate is 13.6%. Given the current positivity rates and the anticipated trend of the positivity rate in relation to our metrics for the safe reopening of schools, **remote instruction at Elizabeth Public Schools is being extended to April 12, 2021.**

Safety and the wellbeing of our learning community, first and foremost, will guide our way back to our schools and back to in-person teaching and learning. Starting the new year and returning from the holiday recess, we anticipated the rise in the case incidence rate in our area that has occurred. Ultimately, advancing to Phase III will introduce significantly larger numbers of students and staff into our school buildings and classroom environments. Moving too quickly to Phase III could potentially create a safety risk. However, we are hopeful the expansion of vaccinations now and in the coming weeks, in combination with continued social distancing and healthy hygiene practices, will work to further protect our community, reduce the positivity rate, and bring us closer to our inevitable return to our school buildings.

The district and the Elizabeth Board of Education will continue to consult with health professionals and monitor all pertinent metrics while observing the guidelines and protocols of the CDC, NJ Department of Health, and the NJ Department of Education. While our return to “normal” is still foreseen to be a gradual and measured process, we remain hopeful to reopen our doors to our learning community again in April. We will keep you informed of our planning and progress as we advance through the next couple months.

Thank you for all you are doing to help Elizabeth Public School students and our learning community succeed throughout this very challenging time. I also appreciate your support, patience, and flexibility during these difficult and unprecedented times.

Sincerely,



Olga Hugelmeyer

Office of the Superintendent of Schools