



12/16/20

Dear Pittsville School District Families and Staff:

On Monday, December 14, the Board approved planning and implementation for 5 day a week onsite student attendance for grades 6 - 12 beginning Monday, January 18. The two available options for attendance for all students in grades k-12 will be onsite full-time or distance learning full-time.

A week and a half ago our numbers peaked at positive cases 13 (2%) and close contacts 32 (5%). Currently, the district has 1 positive (.15%) and 10 (1.6%) close contacts. The district has stayed in the lowest/safest "below 1%" CDC designation in all but 2 weeks this school year.

Many of our students are experiencing significant academic, social, and emotional struggles including mental health needs and county identified risky adolescent behaviors. Through a grant, we have an additional on-site full-time middle school guidance counselor and recently added a part-time School Social Worker intern. School, as we know it, has changed. The majority of our students benefit most from having access to in-person instruction and services and the added level of personal accountability associated with work done with a professional educator. COVID-19 has amplified the importance of the work educators do to benefit our children's growth and development. In Pittsville, our educators take this responsibility personally.

In the event of significant community spread in the week preceding January 18, the District will continue in our current format for the next week and reevaluate for the following week. Keeping our District open and spaces as safe as possible will continue to depend on our families being aware of the health of all household members. Pittsville families and staff have done an outstanding job with few exceptions.

More information from building principals will be coming in the time leading up to January 18.

At this time, Pittsville School District will continue using the CDC recommended 14 day quarantine for identified close contacts post exposure to a positive COVID-19 case. The Board of Education discussed the shortened options adopted by the CDC in the last Board meeting and will discuss the close contact changes at the January 11 meeting after data is collected from areas which adopted the change in quarantine.

The challenges presented to student learning and safety over the last 9 months have been disruptive for families and our school. We are grateful for your extraordinary efforts to support your children when they are not able to be at school due to being in the cohort model or quarantine. Communication between parents and their school is as important as ever. As our country begins to work out of the pandemic, it is important to realize vaccines will not be available for educators or the greater public until late spring/summer/fall and at this time nothing has been approved for children 16 and under. Staying healthy, and when you are not, staying out of the school environment is still the best way to keep the school open and avoid risks to others. We are looking forward to better times and will continue to do our part to make sure everyone is still with us to see them.

Please help to slow the spread of COVID-19 by remembering to do the following:

- Stay home when ill or a household member is ill and keep all household members home.
- Wear a face covering.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water; hand sanitizer if soap and water are unavailable.
- Clean frequently used surfaces such as doorknobs, tables, etc...
- Limit unnecessary travel.
- Maintain physical distances of 6 feet from others as much as possible.
- Avoid large crowds or gatherings.

Please stay home if ill, or if a household member is ill and self quarantine. If you are symptomatic, you are presumed positive unless you receive a negative test result. If symptoms occur, please contact your medical provider to request free testing. You may contact the school office or the Wood County Health Department (715-421-8911) with questions.

Sincerely,

Rodney Figueroa

Pittsville School District has a COVID-19 Dashboard with current COVID-19 data on our website.