

# SOUTH BRUNSWICK TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear South Brunswick Community,

As we all are following the daily updates on COVID and the impact on our society, I am providing an update on the specific impact to our schools.

We continue to monitor both the COVID related data as well as new guidance and directives from the Government, DOE, DOH and CDC. As has been the case throughout the pandemic these are murky waters and often riddled with misinformation and more importantly contradicting information. As a result, even information from my office takes on these characteristics as we continue to try and read the tea leaves of the State and CDC.

One thing that has been pretty certain is that the conditions related to COVID have not been improving, but rather been clearly worsening. While cases continue to rise to numbers not seen even in March and April, the number that is most concerning to the agencies are related to hospitalizations. On November 12th I reported that hospitalizations were around 1,800. Most recent reports show that number to now be over 3,200 with ICU beds almost doubling from the same date. If this was now on the decline it would be one thing, but all reports show that these numbers will climb and climb steeply.

We are facing an uphill battle and while our buildings are safe and we have not had transmissions within the buildings, packing them with over 2,000 humans a day just does not seem to make sense. Here are some key points:

- We continue to be told that the numbers are getting worse and we will soon reach RED, which would necessitate a shutdown of all in-person learning.
- South Brunswick positive cases have reached the highest totals since the pandemic began averaging over 14 new cases daily. These numbers are only expected to rise and what is different now than before is that the ages of the infected people more readily includes children. There is no isolated location in the town, or definitive age group. Bottom line, South Brunswick is not immune.
- In late October we were down to only 18% of our students returning to any form of in-person learning. We expect that those numbers are probably down to 10-15% by now and shrinking. (Based upon the families that have reached out to change their minds already)

- Staffing will be our biggest challenge, especially with the rules for quarantine being expanded to where someone with COVID-like symptoms is now treated as presumptive positive and all close contacts of a person with COVID-like symptoms are to be quarantined for 7-14 days. We are informed everyday of new staff and student cases that require quarantine.

Faced with all of the challenges listed above, I share with you the following timeline update. As you read this updated timeline, you will recall that in our November 21st communication, we had asked that everyone have a back-up plan that goes as far out as January 19th. Below reflects that timeline.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FOLLOWING DATES AND TIMELINES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING ON HOW COVID PROGRESSES**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13TH - SPECIAL EDUCATION SELF CONTAINED PROGRAMS RETURN TO SCHOOL**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 19TH - HYBRID INSTRUCTION BEGINS**

One of the other main challenges during this pandemic remains the mental health of everyone. When I say everyone, I mean our staff, families and of course our students. This pandemic has now been with us for over 9 months. For many this has meant 9+ months of isolation. Our teachers will continue to find ways to address student mental health and we ask that you continue to take care of yourselves as well. Do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teachers for additional support. Our SEL team has provided some great resources that can be found on our website or at the additional link: [Click here for more information.](#)

Please stay safe and take care of your family,

Thank you,



Scott