

# SOUTH BRUNSWICK TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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November 21, 2020

Dear South Brunswick School Community,

I am writing to update you on all things COVID for this past week, as well as a look ahead. This past week was a challenging one on many levels culminating with a non-COVID tragedy where one of our families lost their home due to a tragic accident and fire. Our hearts go out to them and we know this community will come together with strength and care.

The rest of last week was riddled with challenges due to the vast increase in COVID cases. During the week, we saw Brunswick Acres having to close for 14 days, our Varsity Football team had their final game of the season cancelled, and just recently, our entire front office of our Transportation Department was placed in quarantine. It seems that every time we have a move forward we get jolted back.

Back in the Spring, Governor Murphy authorized the Department of Education and Department of Health to develop risk protocols and guidance for schools. One main component relates to the color coding of regions in the state. Our county and most of the state is now at the "High Risk" assessment - Orange. The first bullet on the Department of Health's guidance to schools when reaching Orange is recommending fully remote instruction. If that was not enough, the leadership in the (CDS) Communicable Disease Service and County Health Department Director met with the County Superintendents yesterday and shared that they expect that the County will move from Orange into Red as early as next week. As per the Governor, when the region is Red, it is mandatory to provide only virtual learning for all schools in the region.

**As a result of the information that has been shared, we are forced to pause our in-person Special Education classes and Remote Learning Centers until further notice. This means beginning Monday, November 23rd, all students will be virtual. To assist you in planning, we will not be opening again until, at earliest, December 14th, which is 14 days after the Thanksgiving weekend. I will keep you updated if we are given different guidance at any point. Please note that if the region does reach and remain in Red, or if there is a directive to stay virtual, we will be forced to remain remote until such a time as the Health Department changes that designation. Please have back-up plans that go as far out as January 19th.**

We are saddened by the news we received yesterday and spent the last 24-hours trying to figure out a way to stay open. The news of our Transportation Department later yesterday put the final nail in all of this.

I am not going to preach or tell you how to behave in your homes, I simply wish you all a happy and healthy Thanksgiving. These challenging times need us all to make the conscious decisions to find our silver linings. Today, my girls will both be home from college and we are all healthy. I'll take that silver lining any day of the week!

Stay well and be safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'S' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott