

VOORHEESVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

VOORHEESVILLE, NEW YORK 12186



January 3, 2021

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Dear VCSD Community,

I hope you and your families had a wonderful and restful holiday break.

You've likely seen in the news over the past few days that there has been conflicting information and guidance regarding school closures in our area. The Albany County school superintendents met Saturday evening with representatives from the county and Albany County Health Commissioner, Dr. Elizabeth Whalen, and are united in our belief that schools are the best place for children to be during the day. **The purpose of this message is to affirm that our schools will reopen for in-person and virtual/hybrid learning tomorrow, Monday, Jan. 4.**

We recognize that the COVID-19 infection rate has continued to increase in our area in recent days. However, all available data indicates that the rate of virus transmission in schools is low. Governor Andrew Cuomo has said that the precautions schools have taken have been effective.

Unless staffing shortages require all-remote learning or there is evidence of broader virus transmission in schools, our schools will remain open for in-person learning. We will continue to work with our public health partners to monitor all available information, including how the increased infection rates relate to schools. In addition, remote learning options continue to be available to all families.

The district strives to serve the educational needs of approximately 1,200 children of the Voorheesville Community and does not subscribe to a one-size-fits-all approach. VCSD has prioritized in-person learning for K-6 and has tried to maximize in-person learning for grades 7-12. The importance of in-person education goes beyond social interactions and sound instructional pedagogy. In-person learning allows for the district to provide additional structures to care for our students, including mental health resources, balanced meals, and a structured learning environment.

At school, all of our health and safety precautions remain fully in effect. This includes mask wearing, social distancing, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, and the daily health screening. We again remind you that it is critical to answer the daily screening honestly and that anyone who is sick should stay home. These are important precautions designed to limit the spread of the virus.

Students and staff are required to wear a mask at all times during the school day. They are given a limited amount of time with their mask off, such as during lunch breaks. After they finish eating their lunch, they must continue to wear their mask for the duration of their lunch period as this is essential for time spent indoors.

Please contact your building principal if you would like more information about our health and safety procedures.

There is hope on the horizon, but we recognize the upcoming weeks will be challenging. We ask parents, students, guardians, and staff to stay safe by wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, being mindful of who you are gathering with, and reviewing the safety protocols that protect all of our school community individuals.

The past year wasn't easy, but I am so proud of how we have continued to endure and persevere. Our community has been incredible during this unprecedented time and I am grateful for the support you have shown.

Sincerely,

Frank Macri
Superintendent of Schools