



Script of Dr. Block's January 14, 2022 Video Message

Hello Livingston Public Schools Community this is Matt Block, Superintendent of Schools.

First, I want to recognize and thank our entire staff for all of their hard work, particularly over the past two weeks. It has not been easy to keep our schools open during this latest surge of Covid. We have only been able to do so as a result of the professionalism, dedication, perseverance, and tireless effort of our LPS Team. Thank you. My appreciation also goes out to you, our parents and families, for your patience, flexibility, and support. The world continues to present us with the unprecedented and unexpected, and we could not do what we do if it was not for the support we receive from the Livingston community.

This week we are seeing some trends that give us hope. Staff and student attendance is higher this week than last week, and positive case counts among the LPS community are lower. This tells me that our efforts to keep our schools as safe as possible are likely helping to improve the situation. While our region is still in the red designation on the regional risk report, overall in New Jersey, case numbers are down and the transmission rate is lower. New NJDOH quarantine rules have taken effect and will likely bring even more people back to school in-person. We will continue to put the health and safety of our students, staff, and families at the forefront.

Our school nurses have been true heroes throughout the pandemic, and their efforts have been essential to every step forward we have taken. In order to make their jobs more manageable, we have employed the use of technology to make our contact tracing and quarantining more efficient and effective. Beginning on Tuesday, if a staff member or student has tested positive for Covid-19 or is experiencing symptoms, that student or staff member should stay home and, instead of emailing or calling their school nurse, fill out the newly-developed digital LPS Covid Reporting form. The link to this form is on the front page of our district website, and listed on the script to this video. The information on the form will be automatically forwarded to our nurses who will then determine and communicate quarantine dates for each individual case, likely within the same day. This is a new tool developed by LPS for LPS only. Again, if you are not feeling well, or test positive for Covid-19, please use the reporting link, which can be found on our website and will be included as a link on the script for this video.

Finally, Monday is Martin Luther King Junior Day. We hope that everyone will use that day to make a positive difference in our community and beyond. Yesterday, we sent out information about the many virtual programs and safely distanced service collections that are happening in Livingston that day, and we encourage everyone to partake. Our schools and offices will be closed on Monday, January 17th for the holiday. Dr. King said, "Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase." Over the past two years since the pandemic began, we have not been able to see the whole staircase. It is still difficult to see. Nonetheless, we continue to take one step at a time to keep our schools moving in the right direction, and to provide ongoing support to our staff, students, and families. I always appreciate your collaboration in that pursuit.

Thank you, and enjoy your weekend.

LINK TO THE NEW COVID-19 REPORTING FORM:

https://livingston.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8v2Fpdw7M2YaF7g