



Script of Dr. Block's Oct. 2, 2020 Video Message

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

I hope this video finds our community looking forward to a brisk and sunny fall weekend.

As we end our second week of hybrid learning for our Pre-K-2 students and self-contained special education students, I want to express my appreciation to our educator team, our families, and students, for making our in-person start such a success. We look forward to continuing the process of transitioning all of our students into hybrid learning before the end of October. Our next phase will begin this coming Monday, October 5th, when we will welcome our grades 3-5 students into in-person hybrid instruction at all of our elementary schools.

Families of Grade 3-5 students - please double check your cohorts as well as the cohort schedule for the week. I also want to remind our elementary school families that they need to fill out our Daily Health Screening form each morning before coming to school. An email will be sent to each family early in the morning with a link to the form and a reminder to fill it out. We appreciate everyone's attention to this important safety measure.

Additionally, on Monday, families of our secondary school students, Mount Pleasant Middle School, Heritage Middle School and Livingston High School, will receive a form asking them to choose whether their children will participate in the in-person elements of the hybrid model or remain all remote. We know this is an important decision, and we ask our families to have discussions this weekend in preparation for filling out the form, which will be published in the Genesis Parent Portal on Monday morning.

We are excited to be on the path to have our students return to our facilities for instructional and extracurricular experiences. I have been attending in-person, outdoor events at many of our schools over the past few weeks, and the enthusiasm of our students to be engaged with their peers and teachers is palpable. We continue to be excited about the prospect of seeing more and more of our students in person.

This week, we had our first instance of an individual who was physically in one of our schools and subsequently tested positive for COVID. While in school, the individual was asymptomatic. After learning they had come in close contact with someone with the virus at a non-school event, the person decided to stay out of school and was tested. The test was positive. Fortunately, we have developed protocols to respond to circumstances like this. These protocols served us well yesterday. We worked closely with our local health department to confirm the steps we needed to take. Our nurses enacted

our contact tracing procedures, extra cleaning and disinfecting took place, and those members of our school community who had close contact with the positive individual were quickly notified and will quarantine for the recommended number of days. Several of the people who were notified yesterday have already been tested and have all tested negative. This is good news. All families at the impacted school were informed about the case in a timely manner.

Encountering cases in school, particularly when individuals are asymptomatic, may be beyond our control, it is happening in schools throughout New Jersey, but I must commend our team's efforts to respond professionally and purposefully to the situation at hand. Our partnership with local health officials is strong, and we appreciate their collaboration and consistent support. If you are curious and want to read more about the New Jersey Department of Health Public Health's recommendations for schools, we put a link to this document on the Livingston Public Schools webpage and you can access it there.

Finally, I want to use this opportunity to plead with all of the members of our community to remember that the responsibility for opening school facilities and keeping them open rests on ALL of our shoulders. Please - Wear masks, respect social distancing, keep crowd sizes reasonable, stay home when you don't feel well, and adhere to health and safety recommendations. This is not just a slogan, it is a necessity for us being able to serve our community, students, and families in the best way possible. It has been reported that most COVID cases impacting schools this year can be attributed to people's interactions OUTSIDE of school. This is true for our first case as well. We can only be in-person for education if we are responsible on our own time in our social and other interactions outside of school. We are in this together, and we all must remain focused on making good choices.

Thank you so much for your continued partnership. I want to wish everyone a safe, healthy, enjoyable, and relaxing weekend.

Thank you.