

Dear Parish Hill Parents and Guardians:

As you may be aware, the state Department of Public Health COVID-19 “indicator data” for Windham County has shown a slight spike in several indicators. While the increases are small, it moves the data in Windham County into a higher risk category. County statistics are often driven by significant COVID spikes within certain communities in the county. One such recent spike was in Willimantic, which distorts the average for the entire county. I want you to know that Chaplin, Hampton, and Scotland continue to have very low numbers of COVID-19 cases.

Please also keep in mind that secondary indicators play a large role in decision-making as do “additional considerations” cited by the Department of Public Health. They include the ability of a school to socially distance, effectively use of outdoor space, our entrance/exit design, and the overall population of the school. Parish Hill does extremely well in these categories. Our other mitigation components are also very strong, including mask and risk assessment compliance by students, staff and parents, cleaning and sanitation protocols, and ventilation. Again, our rural tri-town COVID-19 cases are very low.

It is also important to note that our overall whole school population is much lower than the present cohorts in other secondary schools that have instituted hybrid models. Furthermore, unlike other districts, Parish Hill has six foot social distancing in all classes, whereas virtually all other districts cannot do so due to a lack of adequate space.

Presently, our in-school student population is about 165 students (about 34 students have opted for remote learning). If we moved to a hybrid model, we would have about 80 students per day in very small classes. In essence, we are already in a hybrid mode if you consider our student population.

I want to assure you that the safety and welfare of our students and staff, coupled with our health expert’s advice, will be the drivers for all decision-making. Any decision to move to a hybrid model will be based on metrics, health expert advice, and other considerations previously cited.

In brief, these statistics will be monitored weekly and should data suggest a continuation of this upward trend, we will revisit what learning model is best for Parish Hill.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you and have a relaxing and enjoyable weekend!

Superintendent Ken Henrici