**HARTLAND CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS**

*Chuck Hughes, Superintendent*

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August 26, 2020

Dear HCS Parents, Staff, and Students:

We have completed one week of school in hybrid and remote learning mode with understandable high anxiety from teachers, support staff, parents, and students. In my observations, the effort to bring students back into the learning fold has been amazing from every angle. I have been asked by many regarding what things will look like after Labor Day. I have consistently pointed them to the Phase 4 Back-to-School Plan. However, starting on August 27, 2020 the high school will be moved to an all remote format for all students. This is because in collaboration with the Livingston County Health Department, the Hartland area teenage population is experiencing increased positive case activity that has spiked and is not settling down. The high school will remain all remote until the health department supports coming out of the “pause” and feels confident that the current spike in teenage cases looks better. During this pause the health department will be investigating the circumstances. We will set a return to in-person school date for September 9, 2020 with an understanding that this could change with guidance from the health department. Our high school teaching staff will provide guidance to your students during this all remote period. Teaching and leaning will continue.

It is important that the HCS education community understands that I continue to monitor Livingston County data in conjunction with the Livingston County Health Department, who have been tremendous in their response to all our needs. I cannot tell you how important it is that every one of us does our part to limit exposure to the COVID virus by following the advice of Dr. Juan Marquez (letter sent to all parents on August 14, 2020): wearing facial coverings, washing hands regularly, and staying home and keeping students home when displaying any symptoms of sickness. As we develop our legislatively required Extended Learning Plan, the key ingredient in determining closures or quarantine situations will be the guidance of Dr. Marquez and his staff. The data that we monitor can be found at the following websites: <https://www.mistartmap.info/> , MI Start Map and the Livingston County Health Department data site <https://livgov.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/b6dddfbad2ac4125812e301e5694e291>. Currently, Livingston County is showing a 3.8% positive rate for all individuals tested, and 7 new cases per day. The county has had 1,058 overall cases which equates to .54% of our 194,668 residents with 99 total hospitalizations. Together we monitor weekly trends and discuss what these trends might mean for HCS. The number of cases per 1,000 residents in HCS townships is as follows:

Brighton Township = 6.16, Deerfield Township = 2.73, Genoa Township = 6.16,

Hartland Township = 5.6, Oceola Township = 4.5, Tyrone Township = 7.83

Some individuals have asked me about notification for each positive case in the school district. I will notify parents when there is an outbreak that results in making decisions to quarantine large

groups such as a classroom, school, district or in todays scenario, moving our high school to full remote learning. I have said many times that as the Superintendent I will do what is necessary to ensure a safe environment for all students and staff which may require moving backward to move forward. I will not be sending out notifications for every positive case or quarantine situation. What I do ask from each of you is that you immediately notify the school where your children attend of any positive cases resulting in isolation or quarantine (see August 18, 2020 letter explaining this at <http://www.hartlandschools.us/documents/Health%20and%20Safety/COVID-19/Start%20School%20Letter%20to%20Parents.pdf>).

Also, if your child is tested for any reason, it is essential that you keep them home until you have the results of the test, even if they are asymptomatic. Sending your child to school and having to react to a positive test is not a situation we or you want to have to work through. This information will help us to isolate potential issues in conjunction with the LCHD and to monitor student return dates in the event they are required to quarantine. It also gives us the opportunity to work through any data collection for contact tracing that may be required. Thank you in advance for understanding how important this two-way communication is in managing any outbreaks that may occur. I cannot overstate how important this process is to the health and safety of all of us.

While I am disappointed that I had to make this decision today, I was not surprised by it and am hopeful that when we reopen the high school, we can all work to ensure that a safe learning environment is our priority.

Respectfully,



Chuck Hughes