

MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Superintendent of Schools

Jonathan Ponds, Ed.D.

November 11, 2020

Dear Families/Caregivers and Staff,

Based on regional risk factors and in close consultation with the Montclair Health Department, our school doctor and medical team, we are unable to commence in-person instruction on November 16. Unfortunately, the data I received this morning demonstrates an increase in community spread of COVID-19. It is with a heavy heart that we must continue with fully remote instruction for all students until it is safe to change course. The health of our community, students and staff is paramount and pausing our hybrid plan at this time is in the best interest of public health due to the increase in the rate of infection.

Until this morning, it was still considered safe to begin in-person instruction. I know this change is disappointing news for many of you. I understand your concerns on both a professional and personal level, as schedules and routines are being disrupted. Rest assured that we will continue to do everything in our capacity to keep our work on schedule for when it is safe to conduct in-person teaching and learning. Of course, we will continue to work with our Montclair Education Association to meet the needs of our most at-risk children. Likewise, we will continue the fall sports season, as circumstances permit, following safety and health procedures.

Unfortunately, I cannot predict when the risk factors will be at a level which would allow for safe in-person instruction. However, December 1, I will be reevaluating the situation and will keep everyone in the loop.

Thank you for your patience in these trying times. Please remember the best way to lower our local infection rates is to follow best practices that we know help prevent the spread: wearing masks, washing hands, and social distancing. I remain steadfast and determined to implement the hybrid model as soon as it is safe to do so.

[Please see my video message](#)

Sincerely,
Dr. Jonathan Ponds
Superintendent