

FRONTIER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

FRONTIER EDUCATIONAL CENTER

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*C. Douglas Whelan, Ed.D.
Interim Superintendent of Schools*

*Linda M. Leising
District Clerk*

March 22, 2021

Dear Parents:

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide an update on COVID-19 related issues.

On March 16, 2021, we sent a letter to parents that contained a link to a survey on full-time, in-person learning. The purpose of the survey was to assist us in planning for a possible return to full-time learning. There were over 2,440 responses to the survey. Ninety-two (92%) of respondents indicated that they would choose full-time, in-person instruction, should it be offered, and 8.4% of respondents indicated they would prefer full-time remote learning. Eighty-three (83%) of the respondents favored changing the Wednesday instructional model and Fifty-four (54%) indicated that they would be able to transport their children, if necessary.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) published new guidance for schools last Friday. The guidance changes physical distancing rules. The CDC now states that in elementary schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart. In middle schools and high schools, students should be at least 3 feet apart in areas of low, moderate, or substantial community transmission. In areas of high community transmission, middle and high school students should be 6 feet apart, if cohorting is not possible. There are several other details in the new guidance on common areas, cafeterias, transportation, and large group meeting rooms.

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has not yet commented on whether they will change their guidance based on the new CDC guidelines. **Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) issued an email last Friday reinforcing the CDC guidance that if New York State decides that schools can implement the updated CDC recommendations, middle schools and high schools in areas of high transmission that cannot cohort students should still follow the six-foot distance guidance in classrooms.** Also, we continue to wait on guidance for large group gatherings such as prom, graduation, moving up days, etc.

The new CDC guidance supports the planning the district has been engaged in over the past few weeks. We have been working on solutions to the myriad of issues that exist with bringing students back to full-time, in-person instruction. The new CDC guidance brings us closer to our goal. It is important for the NYSDOH to embrace the new CDC guidance in order make full-time learning happen.

Our plan is to continue working out the details of a return to full-time, in-person learning over the next couple of weeks. There are several things that need to fall into place for full-time learning to become a reality. We will communicate fully with parents and students as the plan takes shape and provide a forum to have questions answered and concerns addressed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Douglas Whelan".

C. Douglas Whelan, Ed.D.
Interim Superintendent