



November 11, 2020

Hello Norse Nation:

Hopefully you were able to read the communication piece sent yesterday. While much quicker than we had hoped, this communication is being sent with new direction.

The number of positive COVID-19 tests and quarantined individuals is on the rise in our District and within our community. The increase is alarming and has negatively impacted our learning environment. The testing rate for Muskegon County has exploded beyond the 5% threshold for closing in-person schooling as we're now approximately 20% of tests resulting in a positive case. Locally, we have seen our numbers drastically increase over the past two weeks and are currently changing by the hour. As of this writing, we have at least 2 positive test results back from staff, 1 from a student, and approximately 100 staff and students in a quarantine environment.

With the current health conditions in our community directly impacting our school, we have made the decision to move to a Remote Learning Environment at NMPS. This decision is in effect for the full district.

Please know, this decision was not made lightly and we fully understand the challenges it poses. I appreciate all of the input I have received from staff, our community, and health leadership in our county, region and State.

The following timeline addresses our plan:

November 12 & 13 (Thursday & Friday)

- Students will NOT have school, virtual or otherwise.
- All extra curricular activities are suspended as of 11-11-20 through at least 11-30-20.
- Families can use this time to prepare for the Remote Learning Environment
- Staff will use these two days to prepare/fine tune for remote learning to begin on Monday, November 16. This will allow students and staff to solidify plans for remote learning.

Monday, November 16 through Tuesday, November 24

NMPS will operate via remote learning. Your child's teachers will share specifics and questions can be directed to the teacher and/or building principal as needed.

Monday, November 30

We tentatively plan to return to our current system, mirroring what we've done to this point.

This plan is designed to allow us to focus on teaching and learning, rather than on COVID and contact tracing. Please do your part to help us return to more face-to-face schooling. We all need to be on the same page relative to mitigation strategies. There seems to be no other way for us to move forward; wear a mask, social/physical distance, keep your and your child's in-person social circle small, and wash hands regularly.

A Few Additional Notes:

- According to hospital leadership, our local hospital system is at a critical state and quickly approaching/surpassing maximum capacity
- We are no longer able to safely and adequately sustain face-to-face instruction
- We have a critical shortage of subs
- Families will have the opportunity to retrieve students' personal items - more info to come.
- In consultation with Public Health - Muskegon County, our trend data supports the decision to shift to remote learning. This decision has not only been supported but also promoted by PHMC.

Norse Education Family, now more than ever, we need to look out for each other! I am asking you to please stay positive, caring, trusting, compassionate, and healthy. Please watch for additional information as it is available.

We will get through this TOGETHER!

Dr. Babcock