

Office of the Superintendent



January 15, 2021

Greetings:

By now, all of you have heard about the Governor's recommendation to return all students to some type of in person learning by March 1st. The Governor's announcement, along with the announcement on vaccines, came quickly with very little notice for school districts. We all know how important it is to return our students to the classroom but we still must balance that with keeping students and staff healthy.

Although I want to focus this announcement on our plans for returning to in person instruction, I want to mention that staff members in the Dearborn Public Schools may soon be scheduled to receive the vaccine through the Wayne County Health Department. However, the County is waiting to receive the appropriate number of doses and must complete the vaccination process for those in the first priority group. The County will be the primary source of vaccines for school employees while other organizations will focus on other priority groups such as those over 65 years of age. The vaccine provides us with hope for a return to a more normal school experience. However, the process will take weeks if not months to ensure all staff members who want the vaccine will have the opportunity to receive one.

For us to return to our schools we must remain committed to procedures and protocols we have in place. We must continue to wear a mask, social distance, wash our hands, and avoid large gatherings. Lowering the number of COVID 19 cases in our community will create the safe environment we need in order to safely return to school. COVID 19 information related to our school district, city, and county can be found on our special [COVID 19 webpage](#). Although COVID numbers for the county, and specifically Dearborn remain high, the trend is moving down. The county Positivity Rate (one of the key measures for a safe return to school) has dropped from 15% in December to just over 10% last week. If this downward trend continues, we could see 5% rates as early as mid February. These are encouraging signs as we plan for our safe return to in person learning.

We will look at a potential hybrid reopening plan that would be phased in possibly starting some time in mid to late February. In my discussions with our new Board President Jim Thorpe it was decided that the Board will discuss and possibly vote on an updated Return to School Plan during a Board Retreat that is scheduled for January 23, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. This scheduled meeting will

be used for its initial purpose, to discuss Board related items, but will now include the back to school planning. The discussion on a possible plan for returning to school will occur later in the meeting around 1:20 p.m. Additional details on where to view the meeting will be shared on our district newsletter page [The First Bell](#).

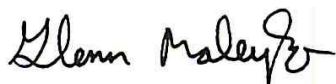
As many of you are aware, we already have a solid [Back to School plan](#) that was approved by the Board of Education on October 26, 2020 and was reaffirmed at every Board meeting since that time. The plan includes a phased in hybrid model for reopening in order to limit numbers in the schools and reinforce safe protocols. Our team is in the process of revising that plan and seeking input from a variety of stakeholders including but not limited to our union leaders. We are very proud of the great partnerships we have with our unions and will continue to work in a collaborative manner to ensure the health and safety of our students, staff and the community.

We are only a few weeks into a new year and already so much has happened. I know we are all anxious for a quick resolution to the COVID-19 pandemic but, as said many times, we must all continue to be patient. This is still a very active disease and we cannot rush our decisions because the decisions we make affect the people in our community, in our schools, and in our families. I can assure you that I, and our Board, are very much aware of this fact.

The balance between the physical health and the emotional well being of our students weighs heavily on our minds at all times. We also know that the decisions we make will not please everyone. However, I am confident that any plan we bring forward will be successful because of the outstanding work of our staff members and the support we receive from our students and parents. I am inspired by the accomplishments that I've seen over these past ten months and cannot thank you enough for your support of the Dearborn Public Schools and our students. I wish you and your loved ones all the best for safe and healthy days ahead.

Please remember to Mask Up and Avoid Large Gatherings.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Maleyko". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Glenn Maleyko, Ph.D.

Superintendent

Dearborn Public Schools