

COVID'S IMPACT ON ECS - 11/16/2021

Dear ECS Community,

I'm reaching out to share important information related to how COVID is currently impacting ECS.

At the close of school on Wednesday, November 10th we had 3 active cases at the school and 11 individuals on quarantine. However, throughout the day on Friday, November 12th we learned of 7 new cases. Of these 7 cases, 3 of them would not require any tracing / quarantining due to the last date the individual was in school. My hope was that over the weekend we would be able to work with the County and tracing would be complete in time for school to resume on Monday, November 15th. Knowing this was not a guarantee, students were all asked to take 1:1 devices home.

Unfortunately, we were unable to conduct all necessary tracing and quarantining over the weekend. This process is fairly complex, as the District has to work with the County and wait for certain pieces of information before officially tracing. Compounding the situation is that the District learned of another positive case over the weekend that would require tracing. At this point, I made the decision to switch the school to a remote instructional model for Monday, November 15th and Tuesday, November 16th. The primary reason for this transition was to best ensure everyone's safety and contain the potential spread of COVID.

Despite our best attempts to turn the corner on the 15th and 16th, we learned of another 5 positive cases today, November 16th. These cases will require even more tracing and quarantining.

As of this afternoon (11/16/21), we have 10 students with COVID and 4 staff members. In addition, we have identified another 81 people that have to quarantine AND we still need to identify who will be required to quarantine from the 5 positive cases we learned about today. If we estimate a low number of 100 students on quarantine and 10 students out with COVID, that represents approximately 18% of our student population.

Another mitigating problem we are running into is that we know we are short substitutes every day for the remainder of the week.

Given all of this information and out of an abundance of caution, Ellicottville Central School will continue to follow a remote instructional model for the rest of this week. We are hoping that we will be able to resume regular classes on Monday, November 22nd. We will notify everyone should that information change. On a related note, I often times make decisions about closing a little later than some would like, but this is done because we are making every effort to stay open.

I would also like to let you know that the District will continue to post weekly results moving forward. While the format will not always be a letter of this length, we will strive to provide transparency until we truly turn the corner in the battle with COVID.

Thank you for your continued patience.

Bob Miller, Superintendent