Allendale Public Schools
District Office |10505 Learning Lane | Allendale, MI 49401 | 616-892-5570

December 2, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your family had a nice Thanksgiving break. I know that the circumstances around remote learning have not been ideal, particularly with some technology issues, but I am very proud of how our staff and students have responded. That said, we are looking forward to having our PreK-8 students return to in-person learning beginning next Monday, December 7, and our high school students on December 9 when the MDHHS directive expires. It is important, however, to understand that there is a possibility that this guidance from MDHHS, particularly as it pertains to high school instruction, could be extended. There is also a chance that if the state decides to extend remote learning for grades 9-12, they could also expand the directive to include PreK-8 this time if they believe the conditions warrant it. We had hoped to hear definitively from the state by today but the news out of Lansing yesterday indicates that we may not know about a possible extension until next Monday or Tuesday. Obviously, we will be monitoring this situation closely and will be prepared to adjust quickly if necessary.

Unless we hear otherwise from the state, this will be the instructional plan beginning on Monday, December 7:

Grades PreK-8:

Will resume in-person classes on Monday, December 7, 2020.

High School:

Will remain in remote learning through Tuesday, December 8, 2020 and will return to in-person instruction Wednesday, December 9, 2020.

I did want to share a little information about our current situation and the thinking behind our return to in-person learning for PreK-8. On November 17, we made the decision to move all of our students into remote learning because we had experienced an increase in the number of Allendale students and staff moving into quarantine. There were also concerns about the switch in contact tracing protocols at the state and county level which made it more difficult for us to assess the full scope of the increase in cases. Now, with our move to remote, our number of students and staff that need to be in quarantine has greatly reduced. In fact, as of today, we only have 2 staff members and 11 students in quarantine. There are also new protocols coming out from the CDC, particularly related to quarantine procedures, which influenced the decision to return to in-person instruction. It is important to note, that the MDHHS did not indicate that it was unsafe for PreK-8 students to be in session, we made the move to remote based on the other factors listed above.

We know that in-person learning is what is best for our students and we will continue to do all we can to provide a safe environment for students and staff.

Sincerely,

Garth Cooper
Superintendent