



# LICKING HEIGHTS LOCAL SCHOOLS

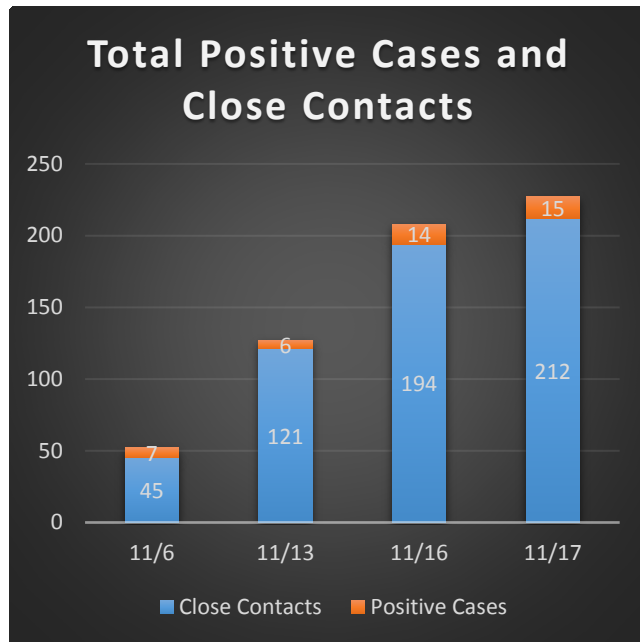
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November 18, 2020

Dear Families:

I am writing to provide an instructional update for families due to the rise in COVID-19 cases. We are seeing community spread in our area and the virus is greatly impacting staff and student attendance. In fact, in recent days we have been only able to cover about 40 - 45% of staff absences with substitutes. The following is a local graph reflecting our school district trends:



The graph shows data collected from the last two Fridays (Nov. 6 and 13), as well as, data from Monday and Tuesday of this week. The growth illustrates the local impact on our school district absenteeism and challenges finding substitutes.

Due to an increase in reported illnesses among staff, as well as, rising rates of COVID-19 in our area, we will be resuming full virtual instruction for all students beginning Mon., Nov. 23. Additionally, the high school will continue in a virtual status the remainder of this week, so there will be no in-person instruction Thursday and Friday.

While I realize moving the district back to a full virtual status is upsetting and a deviation from our current learning environment, the next question is how long the district will remain in a full virtual status? The answer is not known at this time because public health conditions dictate our district's status. However, as we review data the district anticipates remaining in a full virtual status until at least December 18, 2020. Realistically, the time line may be extended to the end of the first semester January 15, 2021. Therefore, the board of education and the administration will continue to re-evaluate the public health and, when available, we will continue to provide updates. The first update will be provided no later than the week of December 14.

As we did at the beginning of the school year, students will engage in virtual learning primarily through SchoolsPLP. If your child does not have adequate, reliable access to a computer or similar device, please

contact your school building directly to discuss Chromebook device loan options. We have a limited fleet of Chromebooks due to the worldwide shortage of new devices, but we continue to try to accommodate student needs. Similarly, [supplemental school meals are still available to all children age 1-18 within your household](#). The USDA granted a waiver to allow these meals to be served at no charge for the entire 2020 - 21 school year. Once requested, meal pick-up occurs every Wednesday from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. at our new high school located at 4101 Summit Road.

We realize the change to a full virtual education model once again creates challenges and we continue to work with the YMCA to expand childcare offerings for families with children in kindergarten through fifth grade. If you are interested in learning more about YMCA options, please contact Jessica Calvelage at [Jessica.Calvelage@bvfymca.org](mailto:Jessica.Calvelage@bvfymca.org).

Specific to athletics, the status of statewide athletics in grades 7 – 12 is unknown at this time; however, the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) has been circulating a survey in consideration of postponing current athletic events until the spring. Once more information is available from the OHSAA, we will share the results of their survey.

Finally, we remain in communication with all three of our health departments. As such, we will continue to provide updates as they become available. In the meantime, the fastest path to reopen the school district is by controlling community spread of the virus that is impacting the safety and absenteeism in our school district. In many respects, our community has the control to manage the environment. I know holiday celebrations in my family will be different than past years, but our short term sacrifices will yield a faster return to in-person learning.

Thank you for your flexibility as we work through these unprecedented challenges and all my best during the upcoming holiday season to stay safe and healthy. Furthermore and as more information becomes available, watch for school building specific updates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip H. Wagner".

Philip H. Wagner, Ph.D.  
Superintendent