

ELMWOOD PARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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ANTHONY IACHETTI
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

JOHN DIPAOLO
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/
BOARD SECRETARY

TRANSITION TO REMOTE LEARNING

November 18, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are grateful for the efforts of our school community to help minimize the spread of COVID-19 and to keep our schools safe. As a school district, we have made every effort to maintain our in-person educational programs. However, as per the NJ Department of Health guidelines, many factors need to be considered when deciding to close schools. With that being said, due to the significant increase in cases along with numerous other factors, we are confronted with the challenge that makes remote instruction necessary.

This is a difficult time for all and we understand that everyone is seeking a normal routine including events outside of school. Our oversight and ability to respond to events outside of school are limited. This week our school nurses have continued to engage with our local health department in an attempt to monitor the large number of active cases in our town that impact our schools. Over the last few weeks the district has transitioned four of the five schools to Remote Learning. These schools, Gilbert Ave School, Gantner Ave School and the High School/Middle School twice have seen an increase in confirmed positive COVID-19 cases. Since October 13th the number for the townspeople that have been confirmed COVID-19 positive has increased from 686 to 861. Due to the confidentiality of students and staff members, we cannot release specific information about positive cases. Additionally, we have also seen an increase of parent requests for their child to take part in the Remote Learning Module.

At this time, in an effort to protect the health and safety of all of our students and staff, we will have to make the difficult decision to transition to a full remote Learning Module across all schools.

The schools will be closed for in-person instruction and will transition to a Remote Learning Module effective **Thursday, November 19, 2020**. We will remain full remote through Friday, January 8, 2021. We anticipate returning to in-person instruction on Monday, January 11, 2021. This includes all Middle and High School Athletics, which will be postponed until further notice. We realize this may not be ideal for our students and their families, but we feel that it is in the best interest of our district, students and our community at this time. As always, the decision to return will be based on the most recent COVID-19 numbers that are both local and across the state. We will continue to keep parents updated as to any changes to this schedule.

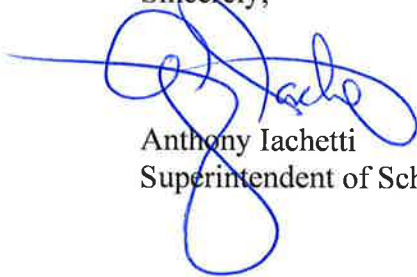
Also, as part of our efforts to ensure the personal well-being of our students and families during this closure, we encourage you to contact either your building administrator or the school guidance department for Social Emotional Learning Resources for students and parents. Social Emotional Learning Resources can also be found on the district website. As these are unprecedented times, that our children are facing, the district supports health policies and practices that address the emotional needs of students and promote student and staff wellness. We also strongly encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, or Principal if you notice your child is struggling or in need of mental health or academic support.

A new food service schedule will be implemented with the student transition to a Remote Learning Module.

Meals will be distributed as scheduled on Wednesday, November 25th for all district students. Commencing on December 1, 2020, meals may be picked up on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the High School Cafeteria Parking lot from 8:00am to 4:00pm. All district students will be able to take part in this opportunity. The final December pick-up will be December 22nd. No meals will be served from December 23rd to January 1st. Meal service is scheduled to resume January 5th.

As always, we would like to thank you for your continued cooperation and support as we all partner to navigate these complex times. We will continue to share updates with our Elmwood Park Community and will post any and all communications to the District Webpage. Please remember, we are here to answer questions and support our families so please don't hesitate to reach out to my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anthony Iachetti". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Anthony Iachetti
Superintendent of Schools