

The following letter is being sent to the families from the area school superintendents and school administrators, in partnership with the Sheboygan County Division of Public Health.



**To the members of our Sheboygan County communities,**

COVID-19 has uprooted lives and regular routines. It has made life more difficult practically, financially and emotionally for many, if not all families. School leaders have observed and monitored how individual and collective actions have impacted the health and safety of everyone, and now more than ever, we need to stress the importance of community.

Since the beginning of the school year, the Sheboygan County community at large has seen a 365% increase in COVID19 cases and is now experiencing an average of 105 new active cases a day over the past two weeks with a case rate of 1,461.8 per 100,000 residents. As of October 20th, our local hospital systems reported approximately 80% capacity of hospital bed use and 83% of our ICU beds were in use. Our public health and health care systems in the Sheboygan County community are heavily feeling the effects of COVID19.

As educators, we have worked tirelessly to make the best decisions for our students with finite, limited resources and ever changing information during this unprecedented time. As Superintendents and School Administrators we know it has not been easy for our families and staff, and we are incredibly thankful for their support while we educate our students in a time when safety and wellbeing are more important now than ever before.

All of this said, we know our communities value and support the education of our children. During this crisis, every person plays a critical role in their education by ensuring the health and safety of our communities. Our goal is to promote safety for everyone to ensure a greater likelihood of keeping schools open throughout the entire school year. It will take all of us working together and doing our part to make this happen.

**We implore our communities to diligently and vigilantly follow health and safety guidelines.** Social distancing, avoiding large group gatherings, face coverings and frequent hand washing are key components for maintaining instruction inside of our schools. As we enter the fall season, more activities will move indoors as weather limits outside activities. Please approach upcoming community and family events with the utmost caution and care. We know that pandemic fatigue may be setting in but please remember that our individual actions both inside and outside of the school setting have large implications. The education and wellbeing of our students relies upon a healthy and safe community.

Disregarding the recommended safety measures may result in further limitations and/or long periods of remote/virtual learning. We all need to do our part. The time is now. Please be safe, stay healthy and remain vigilant in doing your part.

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