

March 18, 2021

Dear Berlin Brothersvalley Families,

The challenges we face as a learning community require all of us to continue to work together for the benefit of our children. We are doing very well thanks to everyone working together for the health and safety of all. As of today, our elementary and middle school students have enjoyed 112 days of in person instruction and our high school students have been face to face for 104 days. We have 54 school days remaining until the last day of school which is on Friday, May 28. We are planning for end of year activities and graduation and as much normalcy as possible for our students.

### **Virtual/Remote Learning**

We hope to remain in our current learning model for the remainder of the year but as you know this can change at a minute's notice. Our students and staff are quite proficient in using Schoology and technology to engage in remote learning activities if required. Our goal is to be in person but this option provides flexibility in delivering instruction.

### **Mitigation Strategies**

Masks/face shields, social distancing, hygiene, and individual monitoring of health continue to be highly effective as methods for reducing the spread of the virus in our schools. In fact, we still have no direct evidence of spread being caused by our face-to-face instructional model. Indicators show that schools, when compared to most other areas in our community, are places that have effectively mitigated the spread of the virus.

### **It is critical for anyone who is ill and/or tests positive or is in contact with a positive case to stay at home.**

It is still important to engage in safe health practices through the remainder of the school year. We cannot continue in person instruction if cases are identified in our buildings and among our students and staff. We understand that this cannot always be predicted but ask that everyone be particularly cautious due to the fragile nature of being able to continue in person learning. We believe that in person learning is the best option but are not permitted to operate when a critical number of cases are identified.

## **Monitoring Individual Cases**

Mrs. Ritchey continues to monitor and track all incidences of COVID-19 in our school community. In all of these situations, we work with the Pennsylvania Department of Health to ensure safety protocols are followed and contact tracing is completed. Our teachers and staff have reviewed all seating and distancing arrangements in classrooms, cafeteria, and other areas where close contact may result in student and staff being identified for quarantine. We have reduced student and staff contact by strategic groupings and distancing students to the maximum extent feasible in all areas of the buildings. We will continue to make changes in our protocols as needed to enhance social distancing, hygiene guidelines and identification processes.

- ✓ **Please contact Mrs. Ritchey, School Nurse, or your principal due to any uncertainty you may have regarding your child's health status. Students should stay at home until you have spoken with Mrs. Ritchey or your school principal. It is critical for all of us to protect our learning community!!**

## **Delivery Model Pivot**

A guiding principle of our plan from the beginning was to have the ability to pivot our delivery model when circumstances warrant such a change. We continue to monitor cases of COVID-19 in consultation with medical professionals, including the Department of Health. If our decision can be made on a building by building basis we will make that distinction in moving to remote learning.

I want to assure you; we monitor cases on an hour by hour basis in each of our buildings. We will continue to consult with medical professionals on the criteria used to make decisions about the delivery model in each individual building. Our approach is a measured effort that uses what we continue to learn about the virus and how it spreads while honoring the partnerships we have as a learning community.

## **Breakfast/Lunch and Take Home Meals**

All Students PK through 18 years of age are eligible for Free Meals from our school district, whether you are SCTC students, Cyber, Learning Remotely or as a resident attending other schools you can benefit from this SOS feeding program. To sign up to receive a meal each day call Mrs. Cathy Berkebile at 267-6950 before 9:00 each day. Pick up is in the middle school gym between 10:30 and 12 noon Monday through Friday.