

Thursday, December 03, 2020

Dear Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 School Communities,

I hope this message finds you and your families healthy and well after the Thanksgiving holiday. As indicated in my previous communication on November 23rd, I am reaching out today to inform you of the mode of school beginning next Monday. After consulting with the Connecticut River Area Health District and the Town of Essex Health Department, we have decided to return to school for full, in-person learning at all schools beginning Monday, December 7th, 2020. Parents, please note that students will continue to have the option of attending school in full remote.

As we plan for our return next week, we are requesting that staff and parents notify their principal in advance if you or your student will not be attending in person due to a quarantine, as well as the return date. This information will aid in our planning efforts moving forward.

It is our priority to operate our schools in person to the greatest extent possible this year. The decisions about the safest mode of school operation are based on the most up to date data available. We will continue to rely on community health metrics as well as internal data related to positive cases, associated quarantines, and available staffing levels, to determine the most appropriate mode of school. It is important to note that with our return to in-person learning, the need for a sudden change in learning mode may occur. We understand the inconvenience this may cause to staff and families and we appreciate your continued patience and understanding as we navigate through the pandemic. We will continue to communicate with all stakeholders in as timely a manner as possible given the nature of the circumstance.

Grab and Go Meals will continue to be provided on scheduled school days outside all schools from 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. for all children 18 and younger.

As a reminder, staff and community members are encouraged to take advantage of free Covid-19 testing available in Old Saybrook seven days a week. For additional details please see this flyer: [FREE Coronavirus Testing](#).

Sincerely,

Brian J. White  
Superintendent of Schools