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January 25, 2021

My recent communication to parents included a change to the Voorhees Township School District's learning schedule. Here is what parents and guardians need to know:

1. Beginning February 8th, Wednesdays will be in-person learning days for students enrolled in the hybrid schedule.
2. Students' who attend school in-person on Wednesdays will alternate between Cohorts A & B (***See Calendar***).
3. Students enrolled in the all remote learning schedule will be unaffected by the change.
4. Parents will continue to choose to have their children attend school remotely or participate in the hybrid learning schedule.
5. The district will continue to monitor information from the NJ Department of Health, Department of Education, and local data such as staff attendance and availability related to COVID-19 to help guide our decisions regarding in-person and remote learning.
6. Should the need arise, the district may announce a shift to all remote learning for students.

Thank you,  
Dr. Gentile

(Emailed 1.22.21)  
January 22, 2021

Dear Parents & Guardians,

After all that we have endured, it is quite an accomplishment that we find ourselves in the last weeks of January 2021. Our journey began when the announcement came in March 2020 that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted our local neighborhoods, and with very little time to prepare, we needed to move learning into a remote format and close our school buildings. It is fair to say that we met that first challenge head-on.

The next phase of our journey began when the NJ Department of Education released the Road Back Framework. We were tasked with writing a plan that included in-person learning as one of the prerequisites, along with a host of health and safety mandates. What followed were several painstaking months of meetings, debates, and planning to begin a new school year while in a global pandemic. Admittedly that planning process

was full of ups and downs, but ultimately, we opened our school buildings for our students in September 2020, which was a significant accomplishment.

Our teaching staff members learned while on the job a new method of facilitating student learning by having both students in the classroom and at home attending virtually. It goes without saying it was not an easy task. Staff members worked differently than ever before. Some challenges were expected, and others were not. Regardless of what we faced, together, we found a way to make it work for our students. Our staff worked tirelessly and has done a remarkable job! I am so proud of everyone's efforts.

During the pandemic, I rely on several sources for information. I use the Camden County Department of Health weekly data reports to help determine our ability to remain open to in-person learning. Another essential variable is staff absences and availability related to COVID-19. There have been times when students had to learn remotely for either quarantining purposes or because the combined variables necessitated remote learning. This remains a fluid situation and a potential return to a full remote learning schedule is an ongoing possibility.

As we approach the second half of the school year, we continue this process to determine what comes next. The Camden County Health Department's recent weekly data report indicates a decline in the number of new cases of COVID-19 since the holiday recess. Additionally, our staff has begun to receive and/or schedule appointments for the COVID-19 vaccination. Therefore, we will begin to incrementally increase the number of in-person learning days for our students. Our first step is to change Wednesdays to in-person days for students enrolled in the hybrid schedule on an alternating basis. Beginning the week of February 8th, 2021, Cohort A students will attend school in-person on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The following schedule will alternate, and Cohort B students will attend in person Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Our Cohort C will be permitted to attend in-person learning Monday through Friday. We will continue that schedule until further notice. A color-coded calendar is provided to help navigate this new schedule. Ultimately, our goal remains to have students eventually attend school in-person five days per week and return to a full-day schedule, but only when it is feasible. We will continue to monitor the available information in order to determine the best course of action.

As we begin to plan for increased in-person instruction, we will continue to maintain all health and safety protocols. Parents will continue to have the option to have their children remain on a full remote schedule for the foreseeable future.

While this is yet another adjustment that will challenge all of us, I am confident that we will succeed together. It goes without debate that our children need to return to a typical school day as soon as possible. The impact that the pandemic has had on this generation of students is yet to be fully determined. Despite the impact, it will be together that we create an environment that will allow our students to continue to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

I would like to thank all of you for your continued support and patience!

Sincerely,

*David Gentile*

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