

Dear HVRSD Families:

It is hard to believe that it has been a year since we shuttered our schools for what was expected to be a temporary closure. Together we have faced this challenge head-on and we appreciate your continued patience and support. Our goal remains a return to full-day, in-person instruction this school year; however, we must continue to take precautions to ensure a safe return for our students and staff. Please be aware of the following important updates for mid-March:

### **Move to Remote Learning after Spring Break**

With the recent increase in local cases and the potential for staff and student travel during the break, the Department of Health and our school physician have recommended a one-week remote instruction period after Spring Break (April 5-9). We recognize these remote periods are not optimum; however, when scheduled after the Thanksgiving and Winter Breaks, this action helped to limit the potential spread of the virus; thereby allowing schools to reopen and to remain open. We are very fortunate that none of our schools have experienced the two-week COVID closures that have impacted virtually every other school district in the county. The Hopewell Valley YMCA will provide Out of School coverage for these days. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. We will assist working families for whom this one-week remote period is a hardship. Please contact your building principal for additional information.

### **Change in HVRSD Travel Policy**

Although the State of New Jersey continues to strongly discourage all non-essential interstate travel, the Board of Education has revised the mandatory 14-day travel quarantine to follow the New Jersey guidelines for unavoidable travel:

Travelers and residents returning from any U.S. state or territory beyond the immediate region (New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Delaware) should self-quarantine at their home, hotel, or other temporary lodging following recommendations from the CDC:

- If travel is unavoidable, travelers should consider getting tested with a viral test (not an antibody test) 1-3 days before the trip and again 3-5 days after the trip.
- If travelers test positive, they should self-isolate for at least 10 days and should postpone travel during that time.
- If travelers test negative, they should quarantine for a full 7 days after travel. Please continue to monitor for Covid-like symptoms for 14 days.
- If testing is not available (or if the results are delayed), travelers should quarantine for 10 days after travel.

### **COVID Testing**

In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID in and around our community, particularly around Spring Break, no cost COVID testing\* will be available for students, staff, and community members prior to and after Spring Break on:

- Wednesday, March 24, 2021, 12pm-5pm (3 days prior to Spring Break) and
- Friday, April 9th, 2021, 12pm-5pm (5 days after the break).

Location: Hopewell Valley Regional School District Central Office, 425 S. Main Street  
Pennington NJ 08534. If you are interested, please sign up [here](#).

If possible, please let your school nurse know if your child has been tested.

*Quarantine due to exposure*

Given the increase in local cases, the Department of Health is requiring that we continue with a 14-day quarantine for individuals who have been exposed to a positive individual. This will continue to be evaluated as our local and regional matrix changes.

If you are self-quarantining, have tested positive, or self-diagnosing without a test, please contact your school nurse so that we can track the potential impact in our schools. All information is confidential.

**Parenting Conference / Student Mental Health**

On Saturday, March 20, 2021, from 8:45am - 12:30pm, please join us for the Hopewell Valley Parenting Conference! Keynote Presentation by co-authors William R. Stixrud, Ph.D. and Ned Johnson of [The Self-Driven Child](#); Virtual Exhibitor Spaces and interesting workshops. **REGISTER TODAY!** There is no charge for this year's conference! Registration will close on March 18. Questions? Email [hvparentingconference@gmail.com](mailto:hvparentingconference@gmail.com).

Please take the time to speak to your children about their mental wellness and any issues they may be facing. As a district, we will continue our work with teachers, school counselors, and staff to support the mental health and wellness of our students. Our counseling departments have developed a [list of resources](#) for families. This, as well as additional information, is available from our district website. If you need any support, please reach out to your building principal or school counselor; we are here to help.

I wish you and your family a safe spring season. We will provide our next return to school update after spring break.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Smith, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
[he/his/him](#)  
[thomassmith@hvrsd.org](mailto:thomassmith@hvrsd.org)