

SAS - Community Update (Covid-19)

February 24, 2021

Dear SAS Community,

We have been collaborating on a regular basis with the Washtenaw County Health Department, the Washtenaw Intermediate School District, our SAS staff and our community to determine next steps for educating the students in SAS during this Pandemic.

We continue to look at a variety of indicators as we assess how much in-person time we feel is appropriate for our students. These factors include COVID-19 data trends, mitigation strategies, the vaccination process and the COVID-19 variant that we are monitoring closely. The information graphic below summarizes these factors and provides a current progress report:

| Focus Area | Indicator | Current Status - SAS |
|--|--|---|
| COVID-19 Data Trends | 14-Day Positivity Rate | Excellent |
| COVID-19 Data Trends | Cases per 100,000 | High |
| Mitigation Strategies | Mask Wearing | Excellent |
| Mitigation Strategies | Distancing | Good |
| Mitigation Strategies | Hygiene | Excellent |
| Mitigation Strategies | Close Contacts/Quarantine | Excellent |
| Mitigation Strategies | Student-Student Spread Staff-Staff Spread Staff-Student Spread | Excellent |
| Educator Vaccination Process | % of staff working directly with students who have been vaccinated with 1st dosage | OK 52% (much higher for Y5-3rd Grade Educators) |
| Variant Strand | Heightened Alert | Caution |
| KEY GREEN - Excellent (Trending in the right direction) YELLOW - Good/OK (watching closely) RED - Concerning (areas that need improvement) | | |

The above progress report is based on information/data compiled and presented at the Board of Education meeting on February 23, 2021. You will note that most of the data in this progress report looks favorable for us to return to a more in-person

instructional model. One metric to consider is the number of positive COVID-19 cases per 100,000. Although considered “high,” this data point is largely focused in the 18-22 age group. In the last two weeks, of the 833 positive cases in Washtenaw County, 65% (544) of the cases are from people in this age group. In the 0-9 age group (the age range of Y5-3rd grade students) only 2% (17) of the cases have occurred in this age group.

Based on the progress report above, we are ready to provide a 4 day a week in-person option for Y5-3rd grade students beginning Monday, March 15, 2021. A full virtual option is still available for any family/student.

A parent/family survey with a direct link will be sent out on Wednesday, February 24th to the primary contact listed in our Powerschool database for Y5-3rd grade families. This survey will close on Sunday, February 28th. If you do not receive a survey, you can contact Amy Boehl, PhD. (saline@k12insight.com) who, in conjunction with K-12 Insight, helps administer our surveys. After we compile the survey results, we will spend the first two weeks in March getting buildings/classrooms ready, redoing class lists, and shuffling our staffing model (if necessary).

For our 4th/5th grade students, we will be monitoring the Y5-3rd grade 4-day a week in-person model, to make sure that we have minimal challenges before offering Heritage students a 4-day a week in-person option. This will occur shortly after spring break. A Heritage survey will be coming out to Heritage families next week regarding instructional options.

After Heritage School is able to return to a 4-day a week instructional model, we will establish a timeline for the Middle and High School to return to a 4-day a week in-person model shortly after.

There are three primary reasons why we are gradually bringing back our students (starting with our youngest learners) to a 4-day in-person instructional model:

- In our original Return to Learn plan, we have placed priority on getting more in-person instructional time for our youngest students.
- We have determined that a more measured approach of bringing back students will give us all the best opportunity to do this safely and effectively.
- We want to make sure that we are able to maintain proper staffing models and not have to drop back into an all remote setting. Greater amounts of quarantining could occur as students/staff are closer together which could result in staffing shortages.

Although maintaining all social distancing guidelines will be harder in this environment (while bringing back twice as many students), there are many

mitigation strategies that are being implemented to support student and staff safety. These include:

- Strict adherence to mask wearing
- Parent screening process (please keep your child home if sick)
- Hygiene (hand washing)
- Building/classroom cleaning
- Individualized PPE for staff
- Teacher/educator vaccinations (the more vaccinated, the less chance of spread)

I will send the next community update shortly after the next Board of Education meeting on March 9th to report our progress on returning to more in-person instruction and any additional next steps. Our end goal is to get all our students (for families who want more in-person instructional time) back into a 4-day a week in-person instructional model as soon as our metrics allow.

We appreciate your support of our students, staff, and community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Laatsch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen D. Laatsch, PhD

Interim Superintendent