



WARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Ware Families,

Happy Friday! If you have been monitoring the COVID Dashboard on the District website (<http://www.wareps.org/covid19/dashboard>), you will see that our numbers are rising expeditiously. During this time last year, the community positivity rate was 3.84%, today the rate is 10.71% which is more than doubled from a year ago. To assure we get through this difficult stretch over the winter months it is imperative that we are being mindful of the mitigation strategies that can assist us in this fight. These strategies include the following:

- Vaccinations
- Safety Check (Pooled Testing – sign up at <https://www.cic-health.com/consent/ma>)
- Mask Wearing
- Social Distancing
- Washing Hands

Another important factor is that if your child is sick please keep them at home. COVID has similar symptoms to a cold or flu so please do not disregard them. Today, more than ever, we must consider each other as we work to mitigate the spread of the virus. Remember, the goal for the year is to have an uninterrupted one. With the lack of substitutes this puts us in a precarious situation when teachers and staff are out sick. To help with coverage, at times we are utilizing large spaces such as libraries, auditoriums, and the KIVA room at the JS High School. Students can access academic work through the Canvas Platform provided to them by their teachers. We are being creative in the management of this disease; however, I need your help in the battle against it by taking part in the mitigation strategies and having students stay home when ill.

Please reach out to your child's school nurse if you need guidance regarding the need to test before returning to school. If you need to find a testing site, please go to www.mass.gov/gettested. At this time, we are not able to accept home test results.

This week I reached out to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to discuss the increase in COVID cases for Ware Public Schools. In that call, DESE acknowledges staffing is a huge challenge for all districts across the state. However, I was informed that reverting to remote learning is not an option for districts. Ware Public Schools has already implemented any other suggestions offered to us on the phone call, as we look for ways to manage our situation educating through a public health crisis. Teachers, staff, and administrators are doing everything they possibly can to get the job accomplished and I commend them for their efforts!

Thank you for your continued support and patience as we make our way through the holidays and the winter months.

Stay well,

Dr. Marlene A. DiLeo
Superintendent

Jennifer Knight
School Nurse Leader