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January 8, 2021

Dear WRVSU Community

I wanted to send this letter as we close out our planned Virtual Learning Week and ring in the New Year. Across the SU we are scheduled to start in-person instruction again, Monday, January 11th at all of our member schools except Stockbridge/Rochester. In RSUD they will delay in-person instruction until Tuesday, January 19th. For everyone other than Rochester and Stockbridge in-person instruction will resume on January 11th, but please be prepared for alternative plans in the event that we are forced to move to virtual learning, as any future decision to go virtual would be made on a district by district basis.

As you may already know, going into the break and after our students' last day (12/18/20) there were positive Covid-19 cases confirmed in the Rochester/Stockbridge communities. We had made it through the fall with no confirmed cases, but as case counts have risen in Vermont and our surrounding counties, we experienced our first school-related cases.

At this time, I also want to mention that even while we know that there has been a significant increase in community spread across the state. In-school transmission itself has remained low. In a recent meeting with the state Department of Health, they mentioned multiple times that Covid spread does not generally happen at schools. [LINK](#)

Once we are back next week, as we would after any similar long break, we will review procedures with our students. We will reteach elementary students about the basics of safety, masking, distancing, and hand hygiene. We have also updated our WRVSU Health Screening [Form](#) to include information that students/staff must remain home in the event that a household member is quarantining and awaiting a negative Covid-19 test result. I feel that this change is necessary in order to ensure that we can keep our schools safe, and do our best to ensure that we can remain open for in-person learning over the upcoming winter months.

Finally, I wanted to mention that early next month you will start to see budget information being shared with the public. We know that this budget season will be a challenge, as taxes are set to rise 9% even if school budgets are flat. We will do everything possible to bring responsible budgets forward and hope that you ask the tough questions and then come out to support school budgets on voting day.

Thank you all for your continued partnership in the safe re-opening of our schools,

Jamie Kinnarney
Superintendent of Schools
White River Valley Supervisory Union