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Good Afternoon Phoenix CSD Families, Staff and Students,

If you have seen the news over the past week, you have likely noticed that there have been and/or will be a number of changes regarding COVID-19. We are waiting for additional information on some of these changes. Please know that, like we have seen over the past couple years, things can change overnight. If and when things change, I will do my best to provide you with updates as efficiently as possible. Here are some updates and information that I would like to share with you, as of today:

- **COVID-19 - Home Test Kits – Will be available soon for families -**
 - NYS Governor Kathy Hochul informed superintendents this week that the state is sending COVID-19 rapid test kits to all school districts to distribute to their families.
 - These tests may be administered by families as soon as they receive them to help prevent COVID-positive asymptomatic individuals from returning to school.
 - As of this communication, we have **not** yet received our allocation of tests.
 - We plan to distribute these test kits to families through a “parent drive-thru / pick-up” one night this week. For anyone unable to pick up their tests, we will schedule another time for you to pick them up or we will deliver them to you.
 - If we receive enough test kits, they will also be provided to staff.
 - As soon as we receive these test kits, I will send out additional information on when they will be distributed.

- **COVID-19 Home Tests – What to do if test is positive? -**
 - The Oswego County DOH is working on updating their website to allow people to report positive test results. It will likely include a warning indicating that antigen tests can be false positive and a recommendation that before submitting positive test results that you get a confirmation PCR test from their physician, pharmacy, or urgent care; especially if you do not have symptoms or have not had an exposure to COVID. I will provide you with more information once I receive it from the DOH.
 - Phoenix CSD Faculty & Staff – if you test positive with a home test, you are required to get a confirmation PCR test with a physician, pharmacy and / or urgent care.

- **COVID-19 – Test to Stay - Not approved by the Oswego County DOH -**
 - The CDC and NYSDOH support Test to Stay. However, the Oswego County DOH has ruled out Test to Stay.
 - Test to Stay programs allow students who were in close contact with someone who tested positive to take a rapid COVID-19 test over several days at school before entering the classroom, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). If they test negative, they can stay at school and do not need to quarantine.
 - Oswego County Health Department Public Health Director Jiancheng Huang stated the following in his interview with the Palladium Times this week, “The county does not have the

testing capacity to provide such a program to all nine school districts. We cannot provide this large-scale testing in our county. A program of this scale would require a high degree of coordination among several school districts and other public partners. Things keep changing and we will continue to assess the situation.”

- Should anything change with Test to Stay in our county, I will notify you as soon as possible.

- **Vaccination Clinics & Opportunities –**

- The following is from the Oswego County DOH in case you are interested / looking for a location to get you or your child(ren) vaccinated:
 - Oswego County Health Department is offering adults (12 and up) vaccinations on Wednesdays and pediatric vaccinations on Tuesdays - https://health.oswegocounty.com/information/2019_novel_coronavirus/covid-19_vaccine.php
 - Connexcare is offering vaccinations to anyone (even if they are not a patient) at their office and have pediatric vaccination clinics next week - <https://www.connexcare.org/COVID19>
 - Other locations are also offering vaccinations such as Wayne’s Drugs, Walgreens, Walmart, etc. The following website allows people to type in their zip code and find the nearest location to schedule an appointment - <https://www.vaccines.gov/>

- **COVID-19 - Shorter Quarantine for Phoenix CSD Faculty and Staff –**

- The CDC and NYSDOH are allowing critical workforce (which includes school district faculty and staff) to work after day 5 of their isolation period (where day zero is defined as either date of symptom onset if symptomatic, or date of collection of first positive test if asymptomatic) if they meet certain criteria.
- The district is still waiting on additional guidance from the Oswego County DOH on this change and will provide faculty and staff an update in the coming days.

- **COVID-19 Updates –**

- It is unclear what January will look like for us in terms of COVID-19, but I do think it is very important to always think ahead. While we very much hope to continue with in-person learning, I **highly recommend** the following:
 - Families – please have a plan in place should the district or a building have to switch to remote learning for a period of time.
 - Faculty and Staff – please be prepared should the district or a building have to switch to remote learning for a period of time.

- **NYS January 2022 Regents –**

- NYSED Commissioner Betta A. Rosa announced last month that the High School Regents Examinations are cancelled for January 2022, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Tuesday, January 25 – Friday, January 28, will now be regular instructional days for all high school students.
- No decisions have been made yet regarding the June and August 2022 Regents Examinations.

- **Stay Home When Sick and Get Tested –**

- Please be sure to monitor yourself / your children each day.
- Students and staff experiencing any of the following COVID-19 symptoms should stay home and be tested for COVID-19, this applies to vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals:

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| Fever or Chills (100° F or more) | Shortness of breath or trouble breathing |
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| Cough | Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea |
| Loss of taste or smell | Muscle pain or body aches |
| Fatigue / feeling of tiredness | Headaches |
| Sore throat | Nasal congestion / runny nose |

- If you or a family member test positive for COVID-19, ***please notify me*** at 315-695-1555 or cbyrne@phoenixcsd.org, so that I can work with the Oswego County Health Department and plan our next steps (contact tracing, communications and / or programmatic changes).
- Also, please be reminded that if a member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, all unvaccinated household members should stay home until contacted by the health department.

Thank you very much for your continued support of our school district and programs. I hope that you have all had a nice week off and I hope that the new year brings joy, happiness and good health to you and your families!

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Byrne

Superintendent of Schools



- @cbyrnepcsd