



Letter Regarding Fully Remote Learning

November 20, 2020

Dear Middletown School Community,

As we enter the second marking period of the academic year, it is clear, changes we made to our instructional model have dramatically improved the quality of instruction in our remote learning environment. Our intentional launch into the school year focusing on connections with students before diving into academic content has done so much good for our entire school community. It has been amazing to witness our valued educators and students reconnect in either a remote or in-person environment. Our dedicated educators and staff have worked tirelessly striving to ensure education continues despite the many challenges of the pandemic. We owe our teachers, administrators and staff a debt of gratitude. Our first semester is complete and Middie Pride is alive and well.

Today, I'm sharing a critical update on COVID-19 and the impact on our school community. **Middletown will shift to fully remote learning, for all students, beginning on Monday November 30 through January 15, 2021.** While this brings great sadness for our entire school community, this shift is necessary so we can maintain continuity of instruction for our valued students. Middletown, received a [letter](#) from the Orange County Department of Health (OCDOH) strongly urging all schools in Orange County to participate in a "holiday pause" covering the period following Thanksgiving through the third week in January. In addition, an added layer of complexity is Governor Cuomo's announcement on Thursday, November 19, **Middletown is a designated "precautionary zone" ("yellow zone") under the State micro-cluster initiative.** So, despite the fact there is no evidence our school district is a source of transmission of the virus, we are complying with the OCDOH urging and the micro-cluster action and as such we will move to a fully remote instructional model. **Students will engage in synchronous, live instruction, Monday through Thursday of each week. As stated earlier this month, students will engage in a blend of synchronous and asynchronous instruction every Friday.**

Please know, we are deeply connected to the burden a fully remote instructional model places on our valued families. Please know we are here to support you. If there is anything you think we might be able to support you with, please reach out to your student's classroom teacher or a building administrator.

It is critical to acknowledge, how truly grateful our entire school community is to have families who are patient, supportive, and encouraging. We believe schools can continue to be safe and healthy places to be and are confident we will be able to successfully return to our hybrid model for in-person instruction on January 19 based on the status of the infectious rate in our community identified by the Governor's office.

As we experience the next phase of this public health crisis together, I will maintain close contact with our local agencies and continue to update you as new information becomes available.

Thank you for your partnership and your continuing commitment to keeping our school community safe and healthy. We are here for you.

Yours in education,

Richard Del Moro, Superintendent of Schools