

Nov. 24, 2020

Good afternoon,

I'm writing to provide you with an update on the status of schools as we enter the holiday season. Yesterday I spent time with the Department of Health and the Department of Education. As you may know, the latest [covid figures](#) from the NJDOH are staggering.

We learned yesterday that the DOH will advise districts to go fully remote if our region (Central East: Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Union) enters the 'red phase'. Our region is currently in the 'orange phase', or 'High' risk, while Berkeley Heights as a township is in the 'yellow phase', or 'Moderate' risk. However, if the region enters the 'red phase', or 'very high' risk, it does not matter what phase Berkeley Heights is in, all school districts in the region could be required to go to fully remote learning.

Additionally, [NJDOH](#) guidance suggests that school districts consider converting to remote instruction when the transmission risk in a local community is 'High'. While our region of New Jersey is deemed "High" risk, the township remains in 'Moderate' risk and our local health officials shared with me that they have additional data that is not available to the public that is more granular. This data confirms that in Berkeley Heights and Mountainside the level of transmission remains "Moderate." For this reason, and in consultation with the DOH, we will remain open for in-person instruction at this time.

Briefly, the guidelines for each phase based on transmission rates are outlined below (details of these guidelines can be found on page 3 of this document [NJDOH](#)) :

- Green phase: **Low risk**; Evaluate alternatives to in-person learning to ensure continuity of work or educational services; Permit limited activities involving interaction with multiple cohorts, ensuring adherence to precautions.
- Yellow phase: **Moderate risk**; Consider a mixture of remote and/or hybrid learning approaches, and/or fully remote learning; Minimize activities that involve interaction with multiple cohorts.
- Orange phase: **High risk**; Consider implementing fully remote learning; Restrict activities that involve interaction with multiple cohorts.
- Red phase: **Very high risk**; Must implement full remote learning.

Please remain alert for updates on potential changes to our school schedule and remain flexible as we make adjustments based on covid figures and guidance from the DOH.

For an update on our numbers, we are happy to say that most of our students who were infected have recovered. Our staff member has also recovered.

As of today, 11/24 the numbers below represent our active cases.

GL- 3 students, CMS-2 students

We are at a point in this school year where we are in a "day-by-day" situation. As soon as I know more, I will update you on our status. I hope you are able to have a pleasant and small Thanksgiving gathering