

WESTERN SUFFOLK BOCES
Office of the Chief Operating Officer

February 11, 2021

Dear Western Suffolk BOCES and Wilson Tech Families,

Thank you again for your support of our COVID-19 health and safety protocols this school year. With your help and with few exceptions, we have been able to keep our schools open to full-time, in-person instruction since September 2020. Our students and staff are our first priority and we are taking necessary precautions to ensure their health and safety.

As we head into the winter break, we would like to update you on a few matters:

Inclement Weather Days: As you know, snow storms have resulted in the closing of school on three days this year. The State Education Department is allowing schools this year to change to all remote instruction rather than close schools on weather emergency days. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, but we want our families to be advised that we expect to change to district-wide remote-learning instead of closing schools if the weather dictates. We will always base our decision on the safety of our students and staff and the best instructional outcome.

Contact Tracing: Western Suffolk BOCES and Wilson Tech follow the guidance of the Suffolk County Department of Health when conducting contact tracing in our schools. Although all programs are unique, our contact tracing practice is consistent throughout all schools. Parents are contacted **personally** by our building staff if their child is identified as a close contact. We recognize the concerns and questions parents have about contact tracing, and we believe it is important to field those questions individually.

Change in General Positive COVID-19 Case Notifications: Beginning with the return from winter recess and going forward, we will no longer be making automated calls regarding general reports of positive COVID-19 cases reported in our schools. A Daily COVID-19 Positive Case Report will now be posted each day on our website at wsboces.org/restart along with other COVID-19 information. We are moving away from automated calls at the request of many families. Details about the positive COVID-19 case report will be provided on the website.

Winter Break Travel: If your child will be traveling during the winter recess, please be aware of the NYS Department of Health travel regulations. Those regulations require that individuals who travel to any noncontiguous states or internationally quarantine upon their return for 10 days or meet the criteria to test out of the 10-day quarantine period. To test out, your child must receive a COVID test within 72 hours prior to arriving in New York; they must quarantine for three days when they return to New York; and test on the 4th day after arrival. Students who receive a second negative result may return to school.

Thank you again for your support and for doing all you can to protect those around you.

Sincerely,



Michael Flynn
Chief Operating Officer