



Safe & Smart RESTART

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

A GREAT START

A message from Michael Flynn, COO

Thank you for helping us to achieve a safe, smart and successful restart to school!

We have been so impressed with the enthusiasm students and staff have demonstrated and how excited they are to be back in our classrooms. It has been such a pleasure to see bright eyes in our hallways again.

I am pleased to report that we are hearing wonderful things from our families, whether their children participate in-person or through remote-learning. I am proud of our instructional staff and support teams for working so diligently and cooperatively to support our students' education.

As we enter our second month of school, I want to take a moment to review our health and safety efforts and to thank you for supporting them. Parents, please continue those efforts by remembering to complete the daily COVID-19 symptom checklist (see page 2) before leaving for school each day. and reinforcing the need for proper facial coverings and social distancing regulations.

These safety measures are vital to the well being of our Western Suffolk BOCES community and we rely on your continued support.

Students and Staff Adjusting Well to the New Normal

When students and staff returned to Western Suffolk BOCES schools and Wilson Tech campuses September 9, things looked a little different. Desks were set apart, signs related to health and safety protocols were posted throughout the hallways and classrooms, and everyone was wearing a mask. Yet, despite all the changes, in little time at all, our school communities have acclimated to our "new normal."

The changes are evident from the moment students arrive on campus. Daily health assessment includes temperature checks. To assist with the process, the staff at Wilson Tech Huntington/Manor Plains High School introduced "Timmy the Temperature Taker" (*photo right*) to the delight of the students.

Although schools are open to in-person instruction, remote-learning continues. Teachers, who are working in both environments, have been supporting parents and students to ensure instruction is effective and that families are knowledgeable about the technology.

All of our building principals have reported that students understand the importance of the new protocols and have demonstrated great respect and compli-



ance. They have shared that the students are so happy to be back that they are taking extra precautions to make sure they can continue in-person instruction.

Health Tip!
Frequent handwashing is vital to maintaining good health. Remember to lather both sides of your hands and wash for 20 seconds.

Communication is Key to Our Success

A good deal of the Western Suffolk BOCES Re-Opening of Schools Plan focuses on communicating with our students, families and staff about the health and safety protocols in place agencywide. We recognize that the more we all understand the process, the better able we will be to achieve our collective goal of keeping each other safe.

The wsboces.org/restart page is an important part of our communication plan. There, we have links to our re-opening plan and other important COVID-19 related information.

Parents are also encouraged to send questions via email to restart@wsboces.org and we will do our best to respond in a timely manner.

Another part of our communication plan is the notification to our school community in the event a positive COVID-19 test result is reported by an individual at one of our schools.

If a student enrolled in a Western Suffolk BOCES special education school or in a program at one of our Wilson Tech campuses or an employee who reports to one of those sites receives a positive COVID-19 test result, the Western Suffolk BOCES notification protocol is followed.

The first step in the protocol is to contact the Suffolk County Department of Health to notify them and/or confirm the positive test result. This contact is made by the principal of the building where the positive test result was reported. To assist the SCDOH with

contact tracing and the notification of close contacts, the principal and administrative staff share information which includes but is not limited to providing the date the individual with the positive result was last in the building, the names of students/staff in the classroom cohort and confirmation of COVID-19 health and safety precautions (i.e. face masks, distancing).

The SCDOH communicates directly with the staff member or family of the student who received the positive COVID-19 test result as to what steps are required, such as isolation, follow up testing, etc. Those who are identified by the SCDOH as close contacts will be directed to quarantine by the SCDOH.

Our principals and administrative staff will personally contact the families of the students as well as the staff members identified as close contacts. An informational robocall will be placed to families of the students and to the staff members who are part of the campus the individual with the positive COVID-19 test result attended.

Additionally, we will share summaries of positive cases in this newsletter on a regular basis.

Case Summary as of 9/30/20:

The following is a list of positive COVID-19 cases by individuals who attend and/or work in Western Suffolk BOCES buildings/schools:

9/15: Student, Wilson Tech Dix Hills

9/20: Student, Wilson Tech Huntington

9/21: Student, Wilson Tech Dix Hills

Don't Forget to Check In!

As part of our overall effort to keep our schools safe, parents are expected to answer the questions below each day.

If any of the answers is "YES" for your child, or if your child has a temperature of 100.0 degrees or above, your child should not go to school.

Does your child have a temperature of 100.0 degrees or greater?

Parents are expected to take their child's temperature daily.

Has your child been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

Positive COVID-19 test results should be reported to your child's school.

Does your child have any of the COVID symptoms?

Symptoms include loss of smell or taste, shortness of breath, cough, headache, fatigue, muscle pain, body aches, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea?

Has your child traveled internationally or to any U.S. state that is subject to the NY State travel advisory in the last 14 days?

The current list of states under the New York travel advisory can be found at coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory

Has your child been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

Please follow all health department directives.

Keep Connected!

Western Suffolk BOCES will be sharing information throughout this school year in a variety of ways, including phone calls, texts, emails, this newsletter and website posts. To keep up with the latest news, please update your contact information.

If you have changed your phone number or not yet shared your preferred email address, please visit wsboces.org/restart today to submit the changes. Thank you.