



MONTICELLO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Independent School District No. 882

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ISD882 to continue in current learning models; District will use November 6th as a staff planning day to prepare for any potential changes.

Dear Monticello Families,

It is our priority to continue to serve the best interests of our students and families while simultaneously protecting the health and wellbeing of all students and staff members. To do this requires balancing a number of factors and data points, while giving some of those data points greater weight than others. In working with our COVID support teams, we review both county numbers and the numbers in our buildings, putting particular emphasis on whether we are seeing any spread within our school buildings.

With that in mind, we wanted to let families know that we will be continuing to move forward in our same instructional models (in-person at the elementary level and hybrid at the secondary level). We are making a minor schedule change at this time, as we will move Friday, November 6 from a distance learning day to a staff planning day. Students will not have any distance learning responsibilities on this day. As numbers continue to rise we need to give our staff adequate time to prepare for the potential of hybrid or distance learning. The Minnesota Department of Education has given each school district five such days to utilize throughout the school year.

The concerning news this week is that Wright County's updated case rate for 9/27-10/10 is **30.58**. Additional data can be found [here](#) at MDH or [here](#) on our Wright County Dashboard. Zip code data from MDH can be found [here](#). There is no question that we are worried about this trend and following it closely.

However, our district numbers remain very low. To date, we've had just [three staff members and seven students](#) test positive for COVID-19. I'm extremely proud of the job our staff and students have done following protocols and preventing any level of community spread within our buildings.

While county numbers have put questions into play about transitioning to more restrictive models than mentioned above, we have a month and a half of data to show that our school buildings are one of the safest possible environments for our students right now. With newly installed air handler units, mask and social distancing enforcement, and a secure setting, we feel strongly that schools are the safest setting that our students will find outside of their own home. Weighing all data points that we have this moment, we believe that the benefit of educating our students in person far outweighs the current risk we are seeing of community spread within our buildings.

Monticello School District is an equal opportunity employer.

That being said, we will be continuing to monitor our school numbers extremely closely. Any indication of community spread within one of our buildings could force a rapid change between learning models. We will continue to communicate updates weekly, and more frequently when required. But until there is data that shows anything other than staff and students being safe in our buildings, we will continue to educate our students in our buildings for as long as we can.

I do want to note that as the numbers continue to grow in our community, it becomes even more important for our families to follow protocols regarding keeping sick students at home and getting COVID-19 tests when a student or family member is exhibiting symptoms. If we can keep COVID-19 out of our buildings, we can continue to educate our students in person.

You have all done an amazing job of taking care of each other thus far. I appreciate the commitment that each family has shown to this very idea. You are all making this school year possible, and you are allowing our students the education they deserve. Thank you. In return, we promise to continue to do everything we can to safely and effectively serve every family and every kid, every day.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Eric Olson