



Binghamton City School District

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October 14, 2020

Dear Binghamton Families,

Last week, Governor Andrew Cuomo identified a section of Broome County as a Yellow Zone, and each of our school buildings are located in the zone. The Broome County Executive Jason Garnar officially placed conditions associated with Yellow Zones in to effect midnight on Thursday, Oct. 8, for a period of 14 days. This 14-day period currently coincides with the delay of in-person instruction until Monday, Oct. 26.

As a Yellow Zone, the state does not require schools to close, but it does require schools to participate in COVID-19 testing of faculty, staff and students if in-person instruction is being delivered. This is being done as a precautionary measure as school buildings with students are congregate settings. Further, there is a chance, depending on the area's trend data in positive COVID-19 cases, that the Yellow Zone designation will be extended by the state. The specific number or percentage of positive cases has not been identified by the State Health Department.

We have received limited guidance from the state about how to conduct this new testing requirement. We do know that it requires 20 percent of the total occupancy of the building during in-person instruction to be tested once per week during the time we are designated as a Yellow Zone and that the testing kits are available free of charge to the district. However, additional guidance and support is needed to better understand who can administer the tests, and how staffing can be obtained to administer and process the tests.

Currently, we have one to two classes of special education students attending in-person instruction in nine of our 10 buildings. We have decided the best course of action is to move all in-person instruction for special education students to full remote learning, until we learn more about how testing will be conducted and will impact our schools.

Our priority since the onset of this pandemic has been the safety and health of our school community. We thank you for your patience, understanding, caution, and we will remain committed to keeping you informed as we learn more about these new guidelines and how they will impact our schools.

Educating, empowering and challenging all students to become productive, global citizens through innovative approaches to learning.