



# FORRESTVILLE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT #221

SUPERINTENDENT  
Mrs. Sheri Smith

November 4, 2020

Dear Forrestville Valley Families,

We continue to be in collaboration with both Ogle and Stephenson County Health Departments in relation to COVID-19, community and school transmission, and overall health of our communities. The purpose of this communication is to update you on two new developments from Ogle County.

First, due to the highest number of new cases received in one day, Ogle County Health Department has turned all contact tracing over to school nurses effective immediately. This means all communications regarding school exclusions, close contacts, and return to school for symptomatic students will be channeled through Mrs. Nelson. Ogle County Health will continue to make contacts for all positive student or staff cases.

Second, the concern of additional community spread of COVID-19 over the holidays is growing as we see an increase in our counties, region, and state. This has been an area of concern and was originally communicated with families in July 2020, however, with the recent increase in cases the Ogle County Health Department has recommended Boards of Education consider an adaptive pause from in-person learning over the holidays. The recommendation from Mr. Kyle Auman, Public Health Administrator, states the following:

*Ogle County is experiencing significant community spread of Covid-19. The Ogle County Health Department has recommended a pause to in-person learning between the holidays and into the first two weeks of 2021. The increased community spread raises the risk for higher rates of Covid-19 transmission in schools. The health department is concerned that transmission rates during the holidays will make it difficult for school staff and the health department to keep up with contact tracing.*

*The decision to move to remote learning is ultimately one of the local school board and the district superintendent. The Ogle County Health Department is making the above recommendation for local school board consideration due to the increase in local Covid-19 cases, local hospital utilization, the assumption that families will gather with family members outside of their immediate household, most college students will be home during this time; increasing the risk of transmission and the local public health system's limited ability to respond to the rapid growth in number of cases.*

We continue to believe in-person instruction is the preferred learning environment. Over the next two weeks, I will continue to review weekly data for our county, district, and each school building, as well as community needs such as hospital utilization. Should the numbers indicate an adaptive pause is necessary, this will be announced by Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.

**If you have not already done so, please make plans for the increasing possibility of remote learning for all students  
Thanksgiving break through mid-January.**

Our teachers met today to start their planning for this remote learning possibility. We will be releasing our remote learning plan, student schedules, and overall expectations prior to moving to remote learning. We will notify families via skyward email when these resources are available.

I continue to ask for your patience as we do our very best to keep our students and staff as safe as possible.

Sincerely,

*Mrs. Smith*