



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTES TO EXTEND REMOTE LEARNING UNTIL MAY

District administration to deliver assessment of local pandemic circumstances by April 14th

PATERSON – Paterson Board of Education Commissioners authorized Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer to continue remote learning until Monday, May 3rd, and providing for another assessment of local pandemic conditions by Wednesday, April 14th.

“The increases of in-school COVID-19 cases among students and school staff in our region since December are a clear indication that it simply not safe for all students and staff to return to district school buildings,” said Board of Education President Kenneth L. Simmons. “I thank Superintendent Shafer and the rest of the district administration for their continued efforts to help the Board Commissioners make decisions for the well-being of our students, families and staff based on hard data and scientific facts.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic remains a dominant part of our reality. As much as all of us are looking forward to the time when students and teachers can be together again in school buildings, that time has not arrived yet,” Shafer said. “We will continue to keep the safety of our students and staff as our top priority and do everything we can to make students’ virtual learning experiences as engaging and as effective as possible.”

“While this is the right decision to protect our students and staff, I also know that this decision is disappointing to everyone. I share in the disappointment that we are not yet able to resume more of the life that we had before the pandemic” said Shafer. “But we are a stronger school district than we were a year ago, and I am so immensely proud of the resilience I have seen in our students, staff and the families we serve. We will continue to do everything we can to make remote learning engaging and effective for our students, and to prepare for the time when we will be able to open our school buildings again.”

Today, the [New Jersey Department of Health](#) reported that there are 142 confirmed in-school outbreaks and 671 COVID-19 cases linked to students, teachers and other school staff. More than a third of the cases, 38 percent, are in Bergen, Passaic, and Essex counties. In December, the state reported 70 in-school outbreaks and 285 cases with only 15 percent of the cases coming from Bergen and Passaic counties. There were none in Essex County in December.

Unfortunately, Paterson and other urban communities continue to lag significantly behind other parts of the state in administering the vaccine to residents. To date, only 2 percent of N.J.

residents have received both doses of the vaccine, including just 725 Paterson residents (less than 1 percent) as of February 7th.

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