July 15, 2021

Dear NPS Staff, Students and Families,

I hope you have enjoyed your summer so far and have been able to spend time with family and friends. Over the last several weeks, we have been busy assessing the start of the 2021-2022 school year. This past week, I met with Superintendents from Marquette and Alger Counties, along with officials from the Marquette County Health Department and Luce-Alger-Mackinac-Schoolcraft County Health Department. During this meeting, we reviewed the current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services as they pertain to K-12 students and COVID-19. At the conclusion of the meeting, a majority of the districts in the two counties agreed to the same procedures based on those recommendations. As long as the current recommendations from those agencies remain the same, which are based on the current level of community cases/transmission, the following procedures will be in place in Negaunee Public Schools for the 2021-2022 school year:

- Masks will be recommended, but will not be required. We will respect the decision your family makes to either wear a mask or not, and ask that you do the same for fellow students and staff.
  - Our summer school has had this recommendation in place since June 22. Some students and staff have continued to wear a mask, while others have chosen not to. The transition to this approach has been smooth and well-received.
- We will not require our students or staff to be vaccinated as a condition to attend our school or participate in sports or after-hours programming.
- If a student or staff member contracts COVID-19, we will require this person to abide by the direction of their physician.

We will continue:
- With our broad implementation of hand sanitizing stations.
- With encouraging healthy habits like handwashing and covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze.
- Offering live streaming of all our sporting and concert events for those unable to attend.

In the event that school districts in Michigan are required to submit an official plan to the Michigan Department of Education prior to the school year starting, we will make the plan available to our school community immediately after State approval.

We have made the decision that Ironwood Virtual will no longer be available to our students. Unfortunately, the lack of success students achieved was not what we were hoping for. In addition, several services that we are able to provide can only happen in a face-to-face setting. We strongly feel in-person instruction is much more beneficial than any online program.

We appreciate your support and cooperation as we continue to navigate through this challenging time in history. We trust that our plan implements the current professional guidance from the MDHHS and CDC and addresses concerns surrounding COVID-19. The safety of students and staff remains a top priority. We are hopeful for a great school year and we are looking forward to seeing students fill our classrooms once again.

Sincerely,

Dan Skewis
Superintendent of Schools