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Dr. Edwin M. Quezada
Superintendent of Schools

December 21, 2020

Dear Yonkers Public Schools Learning Community,

As we begin a holiday season unlike any other and transition into a hopefully promising 2021, we wish you peace amid the difficulties, opportunities to connect with family and friends even though they cannot be in person, and moments of joy that still live within each of us.

Our spirit has been tested since March 2020, by a pandemic that does not seem to end. Yonkers continues to face significant increases in COVID-19 cases. Unfortunately, many of our families have had to struggle with the passing of loved ones, food insecurity, unemployment and eviction notices. Our hearts and prayers are with them. The challenges can seem overwhelming. Hold on to the faith that there are people here to help and be open to accepting assistance. We will come out of this crisis stronger than ever because of our collective resiliency and focused care for our children.

In every school, there is so much to be proud of and celebrate. For example, high school senior Navaiya is one of 1,464 students nationwide to receive a full four-year scholarship to Brown University. Revel in our students' accomplishments, teachers' ingenuity and administrators' creativity on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Students are learning, teachers are teaching, administrators are supervising, clericals, aides and custodians are working hard and our parents have been patient and understanding.

The holiday recess begins this week and we are faced with the reality that COVID-19 positive cases have increased since Thanksgiving. More staff members and students are required to quarantine. With more teachers quarantined, it is more difficult to cover in-person Hybrid Instruction. Our concern moving forward is the potential impact of upcoming holiday celebrations and travel that could produce increases in the virus resulting in significantly more quarantining.

Never come to school if you have a fever or flu like symptoms. No adult, whether they are the parent of student or an employee, has the right to selfishly ignore the CDC guidelines and potentially sacrifice another individual's health and wellbeing.

This is an opportunity for us to remind everyone to please listen to the CDC travel and family gathering guidance. To protect yourselves and loved ones refrain from travel during December and January and limit your holiday gatherings to your immediate family.

If you choose to travel, remember New York State's travel restriction for anyone returning to the State from a noncontiguous state, US territory or CDC level 2 or level 3 country, the new guidelines for travelers to test-out of the mandatory 14-day quarantine and who were out-of-state for more than 24 hours are below:

- Travelers must obtain a test within three days of departure, prior to arrival in New York.
- The traveler must, upon arrival in New York, quarantine for three days.
- On day 4 of their quarantine, the traveler must obtain another COVID test. If both tests come back negative, the traveler may exit quarantine early upon receipt of the second negative diagnostic test.

For District employees, any absences for quarantine time or time required for testing will be charged to your accruals.

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To be proactive, which is what we have strived to do throughout this year, the District will implement the following **after the Holiday Recess**:

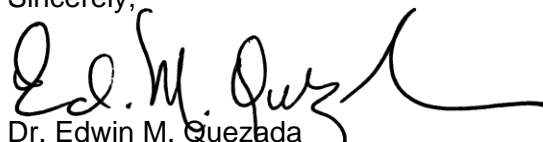
- **Monday, January 4 and thru Friday, January 8, 2021 all instruction will be 100% Online Remote.** *This timeframe may need to be extended based on the number of positive COVID-19 cases.*
 - All students will remain home.
 - All staff will be in schools to deliver instruction from their classrooms following all CDC and Department of Health guidelines.
 - Grab and Go breakfast and lunch will be provided.
- **Monday, January 11, 2021 Hybrid Instruction will resume.**
 - Students in Cohorts A and C will be in-person in schools.

We understand this decision presents significant challenges for many families. Please remember we will not compromise the health and well-being of our students and staff. This is an opportunity for us to ensure, to the best of our ability, continuous Hybrid Instruction from mid-January to June 2021 as well as additional necessary repairs in schools.

Please accept our apologies for all of the inconvenience this decision may create for you and your family.

Once again, may you have a Holiday Season filled with joy and peace.

Sincerely,



Dr. Edwin M. Quezada
Superintendent of Schools



Rev. Steve Lopez
President, Board of Education

C: Vice President Dr. Rosalba Corrado Del Vecchio and Members of the Board of Education