

# COMSTOCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Dr. Jeffrey J. Thoenes, Superintendent  
[ThoenesJ@ComstockPS.org](mailto:ThoenesJ@ComstockPS.org)

November 10, 2020

Comstock Educational Community,

At the October Board meeting, our Board of Education voted to add in-person instruction at the secondary level. In combination with the in-person option already available for grades PK-5, this important decision provided a balanced educational option for all families with virtual or in-person instruction for their children. Regrettably, the coronavirus pandemic has continued to spread throughout all of Kalamazoo county, and the region. While the number of student and staff cases within our district is relatively low, we have experienced a recent and substantial increase in absences due to exposure to the virus.

Unfortunately, and similar to all of the county's districts, this situation is compounded by the fact that the pandemic has made it very difficult to attract any substitute teachers. To compensate, principals have been using other teachers and qualified staff to fill in for absent colleagues, but we are at a point as a district where the demand has exceeded the supply. We simply cannot sustain our in-person educational options due to an insufficient number of teachers and staff able to report to work.

Recognizing that the district was at a pivotal point in the pandemic, at last night's Board meeting I recommended, and the Board approved, a temporary return to full virtual programming. Here are the details of that decision:

- Tuesday, November 10, will be the last official day of in-person instruction for Comstock High School, Comstock Middle School, Comstock STEM Academy, and Compass High School.
- Wednesday, November 11 will be the last official day of in-person instruction for Comstock Elementary School and the Comstock Early Learning Academy (These programs host classes on Wednesdays).
- Thursday will be the first official day of district-wide virtual programming.
- The entirety\*\* of Comstock Public Schools will remain virtual from Thursday, November 12th until Friday, December 4th.
  - \*\* = The Education For Employment (EFE) Auto Technology class will continue in the in-person modality. The Board also voted to continue allowing one-on-one or small group tutoring.
- The district is currently planning to resume in-person programming at all buildings on Monday, December 7th.
- At the Monday, November 23 Board meeting, the school board will reassess this decision.

If anyone has any questions, or wishes to contact me regarding this letter, feel free to contact me at [thoenesj@comstockps.org](mailto:thoenesj@comstockps.org) or 269-250-8907.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Jeffrey J. Thoenes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Jeffrey J. Thoenes  
Superintendent

3010 Gull Road | Kalamazoo, MI 49048 | 269-250-8907 | 269-250-8908 fax

