

IMPORTANT MESSAGE from Whiteside School District #115

Good afternoon.

The Whiteside School District has been diligently working to make decisions to start the upcoming school year. During this process, we have been in constant communication with our local health officials and have explained from the very beginning that we would follow their guidance in returning to school.

This afternoon, Friday, August 7, 2020, our local health department **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** that schools begin the year remotely. This recommendation was based on changes in two specific areas. First, the positivity rate across the county has steadily risen in recent days/weeks. Second, the positivity rate among our school-age children has also increased significantly in recent days/weeks. These two specific trends contributed to the health department's strongly encouraging school districts to begin remotely. Therefore the Whiteside School District will begin the upcoming school year for all students at 100% remote instruction. We appreciate their leadership and value their guidance.

I want to emphasize our schools are and will continue to be ready when in-person instruction is permitted. We will determine a timeline to implement our plan for a return to in-person instruction with a hybrid of our model in conjunction with the health department. We anticipate our remote learning to continue until at least September 11. We will continue to evaluate and collaborate prior to making any further announcements. We understand that this announcement will be met with differing reactions, but we will remain consistent in our support of our local health officials. We commend our professional staff for their commitment to our return to school.

This first day for online instruction will begin on Wednesday, August 26. Please stay tuned for additional announcements next week from our school district.

Respectfully,  
Mark Heuring  
Superintendent