



November 20, 2020

Dear USD 457 Families –

From the beginning of this pandemic, we have kept health and safety at the forefront of everything that we do. Thanks to our hardworking teachers and staff we have been able to complete 10 weeks of On-Site classes and two weeks of Hybrid classes. Some districts throughout our state have not had that opportunity to offer in-person classes at all this year.

Like many locations across our nation, our community is currently experiencing the highest rate of COVID since the pandemic began. COVID-19 activity in Finney County, when adjusted for population size, is some of the highest in Kansas and in the United States. This has increasingly impacted many of our families and staff members and made it challenging to safely operate our school district. Over the past few weeks, the district has consistently had shortages of teachers, paraeducators, nursing staff, custodians, bus drivers, food service workers and administrators due to COVID-related absences.

As a result we have made the difficult decision to transition all students to Level 6 - Remote Learning beginning on Monday, November 23rd, 2020. All learning will continue remotely at-home for all students through December 22, 2020. This will allow staff members and families to plan efficiently in order to provide the best possible Remote Learning experience for our students. Please note that this is temporary, and On-Site Learning will happen again as soon as it is safe to do so.

In order for us to return back to school, we need your help. This is an opportunity for us as a community to increase our vigilance, be mindful that our actions impact not only ourselves and our families but others in the community, and take the necessary precautions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within Garden City. It is imperative that we all work together to help slow the spread. This includes: wearing masks in public, watching your distance, washing your hands, avoiding large gatherings, and staying home when you are sick. Join me and others in making these sacrifices because we believe these sacrifices are worth it to get our students back in the classroom.

Steven R. Karlin, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Finney County COVID-Positive Case Snapshot

Week of	Total New Positive Cases	Positivity Rate
October 23 rd	289	31%
*October 30 th	234	41%
November 6 th	342	42%
November 13 th	428	45%

*Data for this week reflects only 4 days of testing.

Additional data is available on the district's website at www.gckschools.com/data