



220 East Oliver Road  
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*Delivering Extraordinary Value to Families*

## **Steel Valley School District**

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*Edward Wehrer*  
*Superintendent*

November 20, 2020

Dear Steel Valley Families,

I hope that you and your loved ones are well during these difficult times. As you may already be aware, earlier this week federal, state and local public health officials reported a significant increase in the number of COVID cases across the nation and in Allegheny County. The dramatic rise in the number of COVID cases is very concerning to the Steel Valley School District Board and administration, and this has caused us to re-examine our current hybrid model of instruction.

At Steel Valley, we know that students learn best when they are in physical classrooms engaged with their peers and highly-qualified teachers. Since the pandemic began, we have strived to balance the educational needs of our students with the health and safety of children, staff and the community at large. However, as we have seen, the situation continues to be fluid as events rapidly evolve. Earlier this week, a classroom in Park Elementary School was closed by the Allegheny County Health Department because of a high number of student illnesses. Stay-at-home advisories and self-imposed quarantines after interstate or international travel are new efforts to combat the pandemic.

The safety of our students and staff is of the utmost importance. After considering the advice of public health and education officials, the administration has made the decision to return to full remote learning beginning on Monday, November 23, for all students. The district will continue remote learning through Friday, December 11, which provides two full weeks after the Thanksgiving weekend for a possible increase in the spread of the coronavirus during the holiday. Prior to that date, we will analyze local and county COVID trends to determine our next steps; we hope to return to in-person instruction on Monday, December 14, but it is possible that may not occur until January. Here are some specific details:

- We will follow our current hybrid schedule next week, which means that everyone will have synchronous remote instruction either in the morning (Maroon) or in the afternoon (Gold) with their current teacher(s).
- Beginning on Tuesday, December 1, we will return to full days of synchronous remote instruction.
- For K – 5 students that are doing remote learning right now, on December 1 they will return to the teacher(s) that they had for the first nine weeks grading period.
- Athletic practices are being put on hold until at least Monday, November 30, and contests that were scheduled in December are being rescheduled for dates in January or February.

The pandemic has impacted us all in ways we could not have imagined just a year ago. This year my wife and I will not be hosting our family's annual Thanksgiving Day dinner, which is usually attended by at least 20 people. Instead, only my immediate family will celebrate in our home, perhaps with a family Zoom meeting at some point. While it will be a much smaller, quieter gathering, we nevertheless will give thanks for the many blessings that have been bestowed upon us, even in this time of uncertainty.

Please refer to the district's website, [www.steelvalleysd.org](http://www.steelvalleysd.org), for further information.

Sincerely,



Edward Wehrer  
Superintendent