



Erie 1 BOCES Instructional Services Update

Alternative Education | Career and Technical Education | Special Education

November 9, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The rate of COVID-19 infection is increasing throughout Erie County. Governor Cuomo has instituted a new strategy of monitoring and responding to outbreaks of new cases within a limited and definable geographic area, which are called “micro-clusters”.

The Governor’s micro-cluster strategy uses multiple data points (positivity rate, hospitalizations, population density, contact tracing, etc.) to identify a geographic area by region, county or zip code. Once identified, the local Department of Health engages in focused containment efforts. The containment efforts include designating the micro-cluster zone with a color to indicate the severity of the outbreak.

Micro-cluster zones are defined by New York State as follows:

- **Red (Micro-Cluster) Zone:** A geographic area that has a 7-day rolling average positivity above 4% for 10 days AND has 10 or more new daily cases per 100,000 residents on 7-day average.
- **Orange (Warning) Zone:** A geographic area has 7-day rolling average positivity above 3% for 10 days AND has 10 or more new daily cases per 100,000 residents on 7-day average.

Schools identified as falling within the Orange or Red Zones are required to transition temporarily to fully remote instruction for at least two weeks. Before re-opening for in-person instruction, all students, faculty, and staff must have a negative COVID-19 test result before returning to in-person schooling. The school must also be able to test 25% of students and staff each week.

- **Yellow (Precautionary) Zone:** A geographic area has 7-day rolling average positivity above 2.5% for 10 days AND has 10 or more new daily cases per 100,000 residents on 7-day average.

Earlier this afternoon, Governor Cuomo designated a large area within Erie County as a Yellow Zone. Schools within a Yellow Zone can continue to provide in-person instruction to students *only* if they randomly identify and test 20% of its students and staff each week until the data points drop below the Yellow Zone levels. Schools that cannot meet these testing parameters must transition to the fully remote instructional model designated within the district or BOCES reopening plan.

At this time, our schools and programs will remain open for in-person hybrid learning as we gather additional information and guidance from the Erie County Department of Health and our partner school districts.

We continue to work closely with our partner school districts, the Erie County Department and Health, and the NYS Department of Health to determine next steps and we will continue to provide updates as the situation evolves. **Again,**

it is important to note that we are open for in-person hybrid learning until further notice following your child's current schedule.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we navigate this unprecedented time. Our greatest priority remains serving our students, families and partner school districts with high quality educational experiences and access. Our faculty is available to address all concerns and meet your students' academic, social and emotional needs, please do not hesitate to contact us. Additional information can be found on our website at www.e1b.org/covid.

Sincerely,

The Erie 1 BOCES Instructional Services Team
Michael Capuana, Assistant Superintendent
Patrick Canfield, Director of Exceptional Education
Christa McHale, Director of Educational Partnerships and Workforce Development
Anedda Trautman, Director of Career and Technical Education