



SOUTHERN FULTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

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TARA WILL
Superintendent

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SFSD Community,

As your School Police Officer, Safety Coordinator, and Covid 19 Pandemic Coordinator, I wanted to take this opportunity to explain the Covid 19 Tracker Statistics that are posted daily to the SFSD website. Each day, I research the PA Department of Health website and obtain the Covid 19 numbers for Fulton County and specifically for our SFSD area. PA Department of Health inputs the cases by the home ZIP code of the person tested. For our purposes, that is Warfordsburg 17267, Needmore 17238, Crystal Spring 15536, and Big Cove Tannery 17212. Some of our residents and students also live in the Mercersburg 17236, and some also overlap into other districts. The majority of Mercersburg ZIP code area is in Franklin County. It's impossible to obtain an exact breakdown from PA Department of Health, of Fulton County residents testing positive from the 17236 ZIP code. I've done the best I can, with what PA Department of Health provides.

I have been monitoring our Covid 19 numbers since the beginning of the pandemic in March. During the first five (5) months, our county numbers were low, and we were classified as low (by the new PA Department of Health rankings) of "Substantial, Moderate and Low". Unfortunately, all of that changed the last week of October and in the month of November. (October 23 to November 27) PA Department of Health has classified Fulton County as "substantial" during these last five weeks (35 days). As you know, this means no face to face, in person learning.

I wanted to put into perspective just how the numbers have risen in the last five weeks and how serious this has become. On August 14, just prior to the opening of school, there were approximately 32 positive cases in Fulton County. On October 22, there were 62 cases in Fulton County. Today, 11/27 there are 258 cases. In the last 5 weeks we have had 196 cases! Of these cases, 88 have been listed to the ZIP codes of our SFSD; Warfordsburg 39, Needmore 23, Big Cove Tannery 16 and Crystal Spring 10. This works out to 34% of the total for Fulton County.

According to PA Department of Health and PA Department of Education guidelines, we must have two (2) consecutive weeks in the low or moderate

range to consider opening back up to face to face educational instruction. I ask that each of us take the students into consideration during this time and take the recommended safety precautions. Now, ***more than at any other time***, is the time to social distance, wear masks, wash hands frequently and most importantly avoid large crowds and gatherings. This virus finally has hit home here in our small community. The longer our numbers rise, the longer our kids are going to be out of school. All of us want what is best for our kids. All of us want them back in school, but we can only do that when the numbers drop and it's safe to do so. Please do your part, our kids deserve to be back in the classroom.

Take care and God Bless,

William Baker

Southern Fulton School District Police Officer