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REMSEN CENTRAL SCHOOL

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December 31, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

In several press conferences this week, Governor Hochul announced that New York State would be distributing test kits to help us achieve our goal of keeping children in school. Late afternoon on December 29th, school districts received a letter from the New York State Department of Health with several recommendations for possible uses of the single test allotment that they will be sending.

Our goal since the very onset of this pandemic has been to safely keep all of our students learning in school. Situations that have required students to miss many days of school include being deemed a close contact of a positive individual in school or on the school bus, resulting in a mandatory Oneida County Health Department ten-day precautionary quarantine. With the Health Department's recently approved *Test to Stay* program, these students will be able to remain in school provided that they are tested on a designated schedule to ensure that they remain healthy. Tests under this program would be provided for students. Please know that the *Test to Stay* program will be optional for parents. A parent may request to keep their child out of school for the required pre-cautionary quarantine period instead of participating in the *Test to Stay* program.

Remsen Central School met with the Oneida County Health Department before the holiday break and we are currently working on a *Test to Stay* plan that must be approved by the Oneida County Health Department prior to implementation. The greatest challenge with a *Test to Stay* program, aside from the testing logistics, is the availability of non-invasive rapid tests. The news that the Governor is sending an allotment of tests to each school district is certainly promising. More information on *Test to Stay* will be forthcoming.

There have also been questions about the recent CDC information in the news this week regarding shortened isolation/quarantine periods for everyone. At this time, the only New York State Department of Health approved change for schools is the shortening of the isolation period for fully vaccinated school staff members. It does not apply to students or unvaccinated school staff members at this time. We will be sure to let you know when this changes as soon as we receive notification from New York State.

The announced shipment of tests will allow Remsen Central School to continue working towards our shared goal of keeping students learning in school each day, by being able to provide tests for students when necessary to participate in the *Test to Stay* program once approved.

As we prepare to return to school on January 3, please be sure to keep your child home if they are exhibiting any symptoms of illness and call the school nurse. Please remember that positive home test results must be reported to the school nurse and the Oneida County Health Department.

We are here for you to answer questions and help in any way we can. We will continue to keep you updated with important information. Thank you for your continued support! Together, we are strong, we are kind, and we will persevere. We are Remsen!

Here's to a great 2022!

Soar to Success



Sincerely,

Timothy Jenny
Superintendent