To: Parents & Guardians,

Date: January 24, 2022

Re: Pertinent Reminders & Updates for This Week

Dear Parents & Guardians:

Hope you enjoyed your weekend with its mixture of wintry-sunshine weather! This week teachers will conclude administrative duties for the 2nd quarter with Report cards and Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTCs). In addition, this week marks the completion of the first month of the 3rd Quarter and the new year 2022. We are thankful for the assurance of God’s faithful care and protection through the beginning weeks of this year and feel blessed to be on the journey with you as we navigate the blessings and challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation through these uncertain times. Please know that the administration and staff remain committed to doing our best to maintain a healthy, teaching and learning environment that is as safe as possible for our students, staff, and families. Praising God for the reduced reports of COVID-19 related absences during the last week. We solicit your continued prayers, support, and adherence to the COVID-19 protocols of our school. Below please note RMES COVID-19 guidelines and changes.

Please RMES COVID-19 Guidelines & Changes:

Following the recent Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) changes in guidelines for isolation and quarantine for K-12 schools, RMES is also change its isolation and quarantine time frame to align with the Andrews University (AU) and Andrews Academy (AA) recent implementation:

New Guidance for Positive Test

- **Positive Test:** Students and staff who test positive may not attend school and must isolate at home for five (5) full days after symptom onset (or five days after the positive test if they do not have symptoms). They may return to school on day six (6) if they have no symptoms and must wear a well-fitted mask.

Guidelines for Exposure to COVID-19:

**OR**

- **Test-to-Stay:** Students and staff may test-to-stay for days 1-6 and must wear well fitted mask.

- **Up-to-date on vaccines and boosters:** Students and staff without symptoms (cough, sore throat, congestion, fever) do not need to quarantine. Must wear a well-fitted mask.

- **Not Up-to-date on vaccines and boosters:** Students and staff must home quarantine from days 1-5 and test on day 5. Then must wear a well-fitted mask.
• **Mask Wearing:** RMES will continue to require a well-fitted mask while indoors (nose and mouth covered) and will continue to monitor and seek guidance from the appropriate agencies as we navigate through the semester.

• RMES students and staff, irrespective of vaccination status are required to stay at home 3-5 days if they feel sick or have any unexplained symptoms (cough, sore throat, congestion, runny nose or fever).

• Last, but not least, please remember to record your daily Jupiter Health Screening/check (for symptoms) before coming to school.

**Highlights from the new guidance to reduce risk of transmission in schools:**

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends...

- local health departments and schools work together to quickly isolate COVID-19 cases among students, teachers, and staff,
- identify close contacts of those cases, and
- adopt quarantine policies that reduce the risk of transmission in schools while allowing in-person learning.
- When evidence-based prevention measures are utilized, such as vaccination and masking, students, teachers, and staff exposed to COVID-19 cases may not have to quarantine at home and can stay in the classroom.

**Guidelines for Isolation and Quarantine:**

- You **isolate** when you are already infected with COVID-19 and have tested positive, even if you do not have symptoms. Isolation is used to separate people who are infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected.
- You **quarantine** when you might have been exposed to COVID-19. This is because you might become infected with COVID-19 and could spread COVID-19 to others.

**Other Reminders & Updates:**

- **Approval to Access Online Learning:** This is a reminder that RMES provides full in-person school operation, as such there is no online option for students who stay at home for non-Covid-19 related reasons. For students who must isolate or quarantine at home due to COVID-19, the Google Classroom is available to help them keep up with class instruction and assignments. Per RMES policy, students who stay at home due to COVID or Non-COVID-related illness must receive approval to access Google Classroom, or any online option offered. Please inform the office and homeroom teacher about your child’s absence and request clearance to access Google Classroom and/or other online resources. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

- **MAP Testing:** This week MAP Testing will begin for some grades. Since Parent Teacher Conferences are also scheduled for this week, teachers will utilize the full testing window January 24 through February 4 for testing. The teachers will let you know the testing schedule for your student. While no special preparation is required for the test, students are encouraged to have a good night's rest and a hearty breakfast.

- **Parent-Teacher Conference (PTC)-January 26-27:** The PTC appointment link is open for Sign-up. Please be sure to make your appointment with your child/ren’s teacher/s. As
you are aware, Wednesday, 1/26, school will be in session for half-day, up to 12:15 p.m. On this day, you may arrange with your teacher for either an in-person or virtual meeting. Thursday, 1/27, students will have full-day school (dismissal at 3:30), while teachers will have regular school in the morning and Parent-Teacher Conferences in the afternoon, starting at 1:00 p.m. Please note that while the classroom teachers are conducting conferences, a substitute teacher will be in each grade to work with the students for the afternoon session. We are excited that among the substitutes are professors from AU Teaching, Learning, & Curriculum (TLC) Department. Due to no availability of rooms/space for in-person meetings, PTCs on Thursday will be conducted via ZOOM. The classroom teachers will share with you their plans and ZOOM information for PTC. If you have question about your PTC or would like to make a special arrangement with your child’s teacher, please do not hesitate to contact him/her.

- **Tuition Payment Due:** This is a reminder that tuition payment is due on January 25th. Please contact Mrs. Giddings, the Business Manager if you have any questions.

**Weather-Related School Closing:** Please be reminded that for weather-related closing RMES follows Berrien RESA.

**Important 3rd Quarter Dates to Remember:**

- January 3-- Principal’s Reading Challenge
- January 26-27—Parent-Teacher Conference
- January 24-February 4—MAP Testing
- February—Black History Month
- February 14-18—Student Led Week of Prayer by Mr. Swackhamer & Grade 6
- February Annual Family Literacy Night (Coordinators—Reading Resource, ELA Teacher and H&S)

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” Romans 8:37

Have a pleasant and productive week!

Dr. Savory

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