

From: **Powers, Susan** <spowers@co.door.wi.us>
Date: Mon, Nov 9, 2020 at 12:59 PM
Subject: RE: Recommendation
To: Tina VanMeer <tvanmeer@gibraltar.k12.wi.us>

Good morning Tina,

Thank you for this question.

Currently, we (Pubic Health) are several days behind in calling positive cases, and have once again modified our process to address this. It has been an unending challenge to keep up with the escalating number of cases. I do not want to speak for DCMC, but know they are challenged to keep up with the situations COVID presents. I believe on Wednesday of this week, the state will add an additional category to their metrics to reflect the huge uptick in cases.

I urge you to consider the community as a whole, as well as your school community in your decision. The more people interact with others outside of their household, the more COVID is able to spread.

Strictly from a COVID point of view, I would say that now is the exact wrong time to begin face to face school. However, I know there are other important considerations, which very much effect the health and well being of families and students. If you feel that you are to the tipping point making it time to open campus I certainly respect your decision and perspective.

Quite frankly, if you open please be ready for many COVID concerns on a daily basis. I think that your school nurse (Deb) who spends time at another school district has valuable experience dealing with cases. School staff will be need to be ready to assist with contact tracing at the school, determining who needs to quarantine, and notifying families of this. All of the guidelines are in the DPI publication, <https://link.edgepilot.com/s/6d9afb9c/uJprCzVh10Gyj165BPPNdQ?u=https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02757.pdf>

which we have all needed to become familiar with.

Also, families need to become familiar (if not already) with isolation and quarantine guidelines: https://link.edgepilot.com/s/bda6118d/VYoxmpmkikqZdP6MtF9xzw?u=https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/Returning_to_School_After_COVID-19.pdf

The link above is to a very inclusive DHS publication that has all the information families need. Other schools felt this was too long and that parents would not read it, but it is a great reference. We are in a new time, one in which parents simply cannot send their student to school with even mild symptoms that could be COVID.

A class, or several classes, may need to switch to virtual at any time if there is a COVID case. You would of course need to be prepared for this, without much warning.

All of us need to remember to maintain the 6 foot distancing as much as possible, masking, and frequent handwashing. These guidelines have particular challenges at school. I am not sure where Gibraltar is in regards to winter sports. Please know that Public Health strongly discourages winter sports at this time. These sports occur in the very conditions where COVID is best spread: indoors, and close physical contact with people from other households. Contact tracer's capacity in schools and at Public Health will be further challenged with winter sports. As I said, I am not sure where Gibraltar is with winter sports, but am aware other Door County school districts are participating.

Tina we continue to meet every Thursday morning with school leaders, and the meetings have included some discussion of the challenges of in-person school, as well as updates from us and DCMC. I believe you are on the meeting invite list, but if not please let me know! Others from your school could attend if you would like.

I truly wish I could say that I was not concerned, and that opening your campus would be absolutely fine! We are all tired of COVID!

Let me know if you have any questions-take care, and good luck, these are certainly tough decisions.

Sue

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From: Tina VanMeer <tvanmeer@gibraltar.k12.wi.us>
Sent: Monday, November 9, 2020 10:33 AM
To: Powers, Susan <spowers@co.door.wi.us>
Subject: Recommendation

Good Morning,

I have been asked by one of my Board members to reach out to you regarding the opening of our school campus. The Board will be deciding tonight whether to open campus to in-school learning or remain closed. The Board member is concerned about opening campus right now due to the escalating spread of COVID in the county. Do you have any thoughts or recommendations that you would share with the Board for their consideration this evening.

Thank you,

Tina

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Tina Van Meer

Superintendent

Gibraltar Area School District

Engaging Minds, Empowering Learning, Achieving Excellence