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Dr. Rick Townsend
Superintendent

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Assistant Superintendent

PRESS RELEASE

January 12, 2021

PICKENS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Distance Learning to Continue

Monday, January 18, 2021, is a holiday for students and staff in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. On Tuesday, January 19, 2021, students enrolled in traditional school will continue distance learning using the itsLearning platform and students enrolled in Pickens Virtual Academy will continue working on Pearson Connexus. We will announce school plans for the week of January 25, 2021, no later than next Thursday, January 21, 2021.

We understand that any alternative learning model other than face-to-face may create challenges for some of our families. As of this morning, our numbers continue to trend upward within our school community where we currently have 114 in quarantine or isolation. While this number is lower than it has been during the past few weeks, we believe these numbers are a direct result of implementing distance learning. While the case numbers are important, consideration of additional factors affecting our community are also key to our decisions such as availability of emergency or critical care services in our local and nearby communities. In order to responsibly return students to our building, we must be able to provide all needed services without interruption including instruction, transportation, and food service.

In Pickens County, we currently have a positivity rate of 28.2% over the last 14 days with 1,003 positive test results reported through the Department of Public Health ELR system. In fact, 79.9% of Georgia's 159 counties are in the red zone for positivity classification. If you would like additional information about surrounding counties, visit the DPH website at www.dph.georgia.gov.

Please continue to follow the learning expectations communicated by your child's teacher and school principal. As mentioned previously, we are aware that alternative learning models pose some challenges for our families. Work with your child's teacher or school administrator if you have any type of educational or support needs. They are more than willing to work with you.

More information will be forthcoming regarding meal service for families. Please continue to report COVID exposure and illnesses to your child's school during this time. Thank you for your continued support as we work together for our children.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rick Townsend
Superintendent



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