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Dr. Rick Townsend  
Superintendent

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January 4, 2021

Dear Pickens County Families,

Out of an abundance of concern for our families and entire school community, all schools will remain closed the remainder of this week due to several important factors. There will also be no athletic or extra-curricular events this week. The important factors include:

- Health officials anticipate the number of positive cases in our community to continue to rise.
- Area health care providers are in a critical position when it comes to availability to provide service to patients.
- The positivity rate is currently at 26% for the district; According to CDC indicators, anything above 10% places us in the red zone which is the "Highest risk of transmission in schools."
- We currently have 50 staff members in quarantine/isolation.

Beginning next week, January 11, 2021, traditional students will be expected to participate in distance learning on the itsLearning platform. Expectations will be sent out from your child's teacher or school regarding instruction/lessons, daily schedule, teacher availability, support on using the itsLearning platform, and other important details to help your child be successful during this time. If your child is enrolled in Pickens Virtual Academy through Pearson Connexus, courses will begin January 11, 2021, as well. If your child is new to traditional school, teachers/staff will reach out with information/tutoring on how to use the itsLearning platform over the next few days.

We will provide more information on meal service over the next couple of days. We will provide updates for the week of January 18, 2021, no later than Thursday, January 14, 2021.

If you have questions or concerns about a specific family situation regarding distance learning, reach out to your child's teacher via email. We will continue to try and provide as much notice as possible; however, as you are aware, this is a constantly changing situation. We appreciate your support and understanding.

Respectfully,

Dr. Rick Townsend  
Superintendent



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[www.pickenscountyschools.org](http://www.pickenscountyschools.org)