



December 22, 2021

Dear Governor McKee, Commissioner Infante-Green, Dr. Alexander-Scott,

As the holidays are upon us, the Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association (RISSA), composed of the superintendents of all RI districts, recommends the following circumstances for schools in RI when we return from holiday break.

Our students are experiencing trauma, learning loss and increased time away from school, due to the circumstances of COVID-19, including quarantining as a "close contact." Both anecdotally and in data review, we have noticed that most students who have been excluded from school due to being a close contact, have not tested positive during their quarantine. Therefore, hundreds of healthy students have lost countless hours of school, for no reason.

We, as education professionals, know that children being in school ensures their physical and emotional safety, their continuity of learning, and enables families to continue working to support their financial needs. We want to keep that educational opportunity viable for as many students as possible.

Therefore, given the current status of school infection rates in RI, we want to resume in person education when we return on or about January 3, 2022. When we return, districts will promote screen to stay protocols. Screen to stay is defined as: unless students are symptomatic or test positive, students should attend school in person. Healthy children belong in school.

Of course, if there is a significant increase in the number of positive cases in our staff or students, or if RIDOH or the governor closes schools statewide, we would of course follow the guidance or directive.

Respectfully,

Kathryn Crowley  
President RISSA

Thomas DiPaola  
Executive Director RISSA