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February 23, 2022

Dear Queen Bee Families,

In light of the significant decreases in the number of COVID-19 Cases that we are experiencing in our district and our community and as a result of recent court decisions and legal developments, we will transition to the next phase of our layered mitigation plan. Throughout this public health emergency, we have employed a combination of strategies to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in our schools and, when it has been our discretion, we have always attempted to match the intensity of our mitigations to the intensity of the threat that we have been facing. Higher rates of transmission have been met with higher levels of mitigation. Conversely, we have been able to lower our mitigations when transmission has been low.

We have experienced few if any cases of COVID-19 among the students or faculty for the past three weeks, and our community data has steadily and significantly declined. This is good news. Certainly, we have experienced periods of intense spread throughout the region and our community over the past two years. However, we have experienced only a handful of school-based transmissions throughout the entire emergency. Having led, managed, and monitored our efforts to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in our district, I have come to believe that our layered mitigation strategy has been the key and no single layer was solely responsible for preventing transmission in our schools.

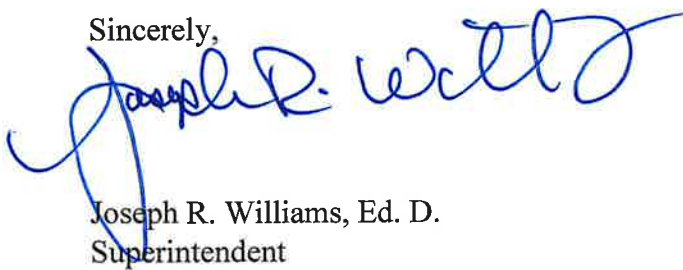
Our experience over the past two years and a careful review of our data and that of our surrounding communities leads us to the conclusion that we can responsibly resume removing layers of our mitigation strategy without the unnecessary risk of harm to our students or faculty members. We will proceed by relaxing or removing one layer at a time and monitoring our local data for a period of two weeks to determine the impact, if any, of our un-layering. Our updated layered mitigation plan accompanies this letter, and it will be posted on our district website as well.

The updated plan includes a Recommendation to remain masked while in a group setting while the Test Positivity Rate remains above 2%. Currently, the Test Positivity Rate is just above 4%, which is considered a Moderate level of risk. Individual students and employees of Queen Bee 16 will have the option to determine if masks are appropriate while we experience minimal to no COVID-19 Cases in our district and Moderate or Minimal levels of Test Positivity in our community and region. The decision to mask under these conditions is an individual choice, and the choice of each individual must be respected. Our administrators

and teachers will work with each class to ensure that this is well understood by our students and colleagues prior to the implementation of our updated plan.

Please take a moment to review the updated Layered Mitigation Plan prior to the implementation on February 28th, 2022. Feel free to call your child's principal if you have questions, or concerns or feel free to reach out to my office directly if your insight or concern requires my attention. We have worked hard to maintain a safe and responsible course throughout this emergency, and it appears that there is light at the end of the tunnel. It is my intention to continue to operate in a safe and responsible manner as we make steady progress to a world beyond a pandemic.

Sincerely,



Joseph R. Williams, Ed. D.
Superintendent