



# Spackenkill's Response to COVID-19

February 2, 2021

# Tonight's Topics

- Uncertainty/Conflicting Reports
- Goals
- COVID Dashboard
- Quarantining
- Case Study
- Other Districts
- Hybrid 1 Attendance
- Hybrid 2
- Area Colleges
- What Can We Do?
- Vaccinations
- Hope



# Uncertainty



Our community (as well as the world) has been dealing with the uncertainty of this situation for quite some time and our community is tired.

We, as humans, crave certainty and not having it causes fatigue.

We, as a district, are trying to counteract uncertainty.

Patience and support

# Conflicting Reports

Numerous Dutchess schools going remote

Rates going up

Rates going down

Rates do not count - zone designation eliminated

Pandemic Preparedness Plan

Full in-person

New York Times

The Atlantic

Spectrum News

2 masks

Athletics - High-risk sports

Multiple new variants possibly impacting youngsters

# Conflicting Reports: How Can We Bring Back Athletics, but Not Classroom Students?

If we can bring high-risk sports like wrestling, basketball, and cheerleading, how can we not bring our kids back to the classroom?

Numerous meetings with the Dutchess County Department (DBCH), Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents (LHCSS), and Dutchess County superintendents focused on this question. Three meetings last week alone.

Return to School Committee grappling with this question.

# COVID News Stories

poughkeepsie journal

50% of COVID deaths at NY nursing homes undercounted: AG probe

New York COVID vaccine: Live Q&A today at noon

4h ago

Wrestling: Weighing in with John Jay-East Fishkill's Evan Jackob

5h ago

FOR SUBSCRIBERS

'It's a nightmare': Older adults struggle in scramble for COVID vaccine

5h ago

Dutchess COVID cases drop 29% in four days

19h ago

FOR SUBSCRIBERS

Top Stories Popular Sections Saved

poughkeepsie journal

50% of COVID deaths at NY nursing homes undercounted: AG probe

Your questions about NY's vaccine system, answered

OPINION

Speech is free, but a platform for hate speech is not a right

5h ago

FOR SUBSCRIBERS

Screening shows some athletes need cardiac follow-up after COVID

4h ago

Dutchess County COVID-19 numbers rising

18h ago

Add a location to get your weather

Top Stories Popular Sections Saved

poughkeepsie journal

50% of COVID deaths at NY nursing homes undercounted: AG probe

Hudson Valley officials approve high-risk sports

17h ago

Covid-19 vaccination site at Poughkeepsie Galleria

STORY FROM MIDHUDSON REGIONAL HOSPITAL

No time to lose

College basketball: Marist, Army teams paused by COVID-19

19h ago

New York lifts COVID restrictions in all orange zones

Top Stories Popular Sections Saved

poughkeepsie journal

50% of COVID deaths at NY nursing homes undercounted: AG probe

Molinaro: High-risk sports can and will begin soon

Dutchess County tops 18,000 COVID-19 cases

Push on for Marist to reverse football shutdown

FOR SUBSCRIBERS

Remembering Binghamton teacher who died of COVID

Snow on the way: How much is expected to fall

Top Stories Popular Sections Saved

# Goals



The Return to School Committee's goal is to increase in-person instruction while focusing on the health and safety of our community.

**Balancing act:** We are trying to keep our community as safe as possible while trying to keep students in school as much as possible.

# COVID UPDATE DASHBOARD



**The New York State COVID Dashboard reflects the number of cases since the pandemic began.**

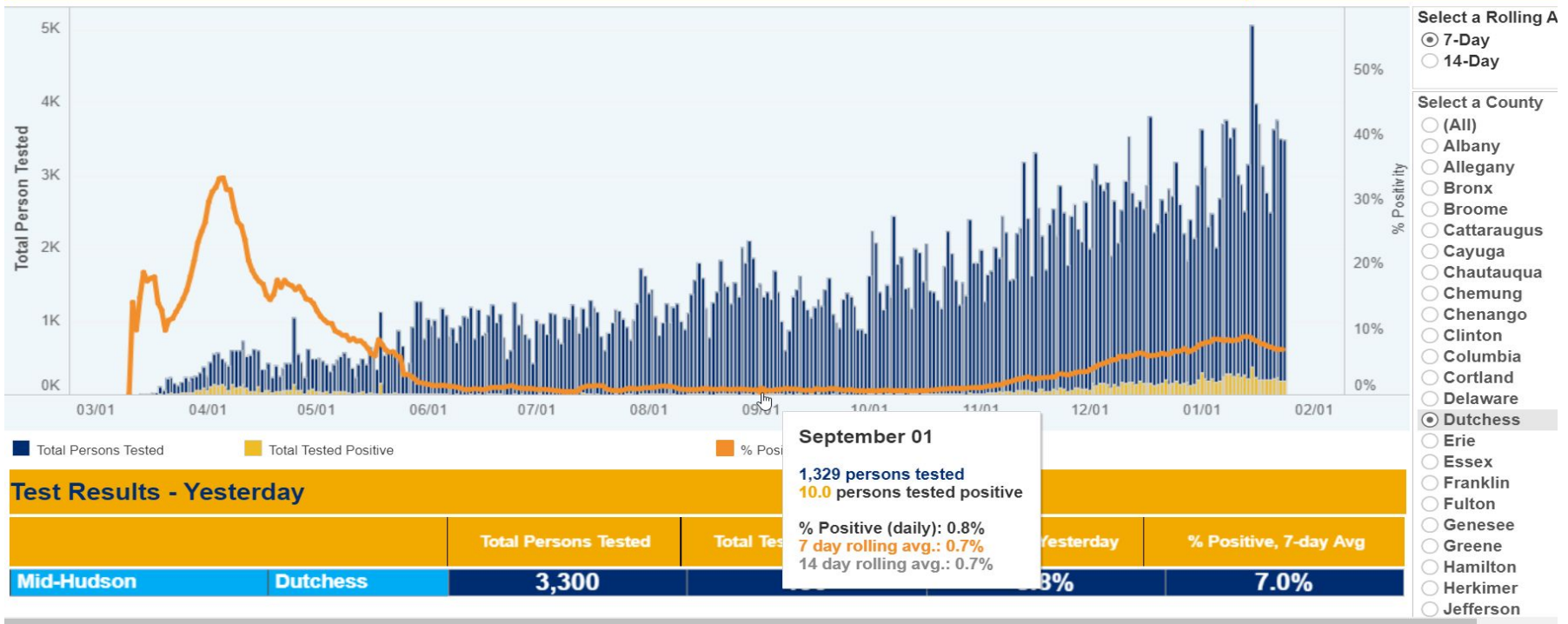
<https://forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-county-dashboard>



# September 1, 2020

## % Positive Results Over Time - Dutchess

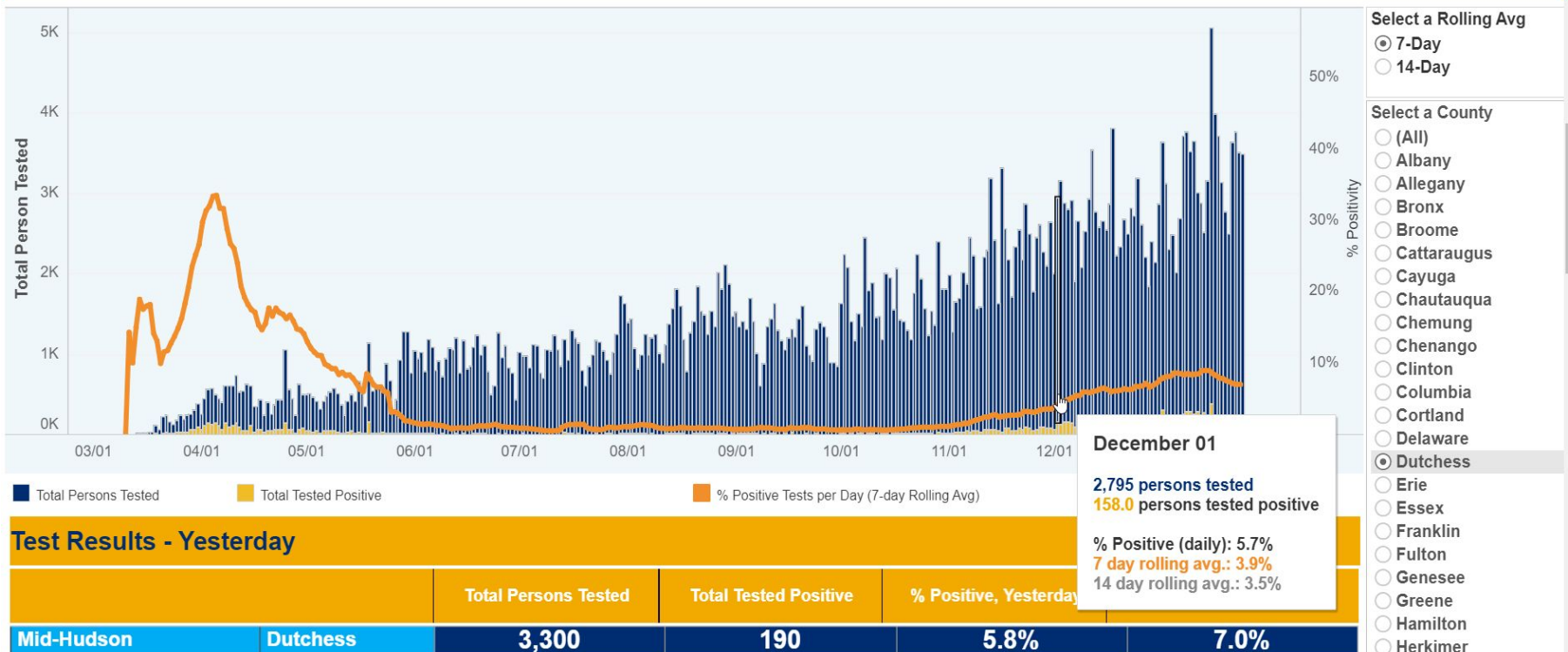
Testing  
Testing data last u



# December 1, 2020

## % Positive Results Over Time - Dutchess

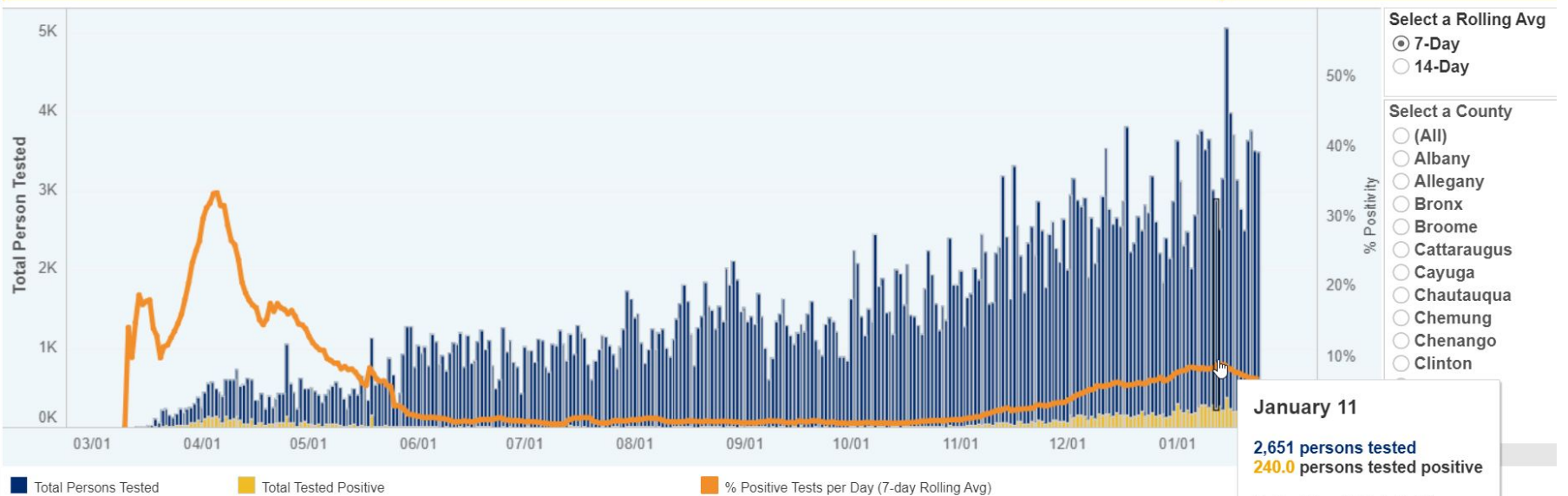
Testing data as of 12/01/2020  
Testing data last updated 12/01/2020



# January 15, 2021

## % Positive Results Over Time - Dutchess

Testing data last updated



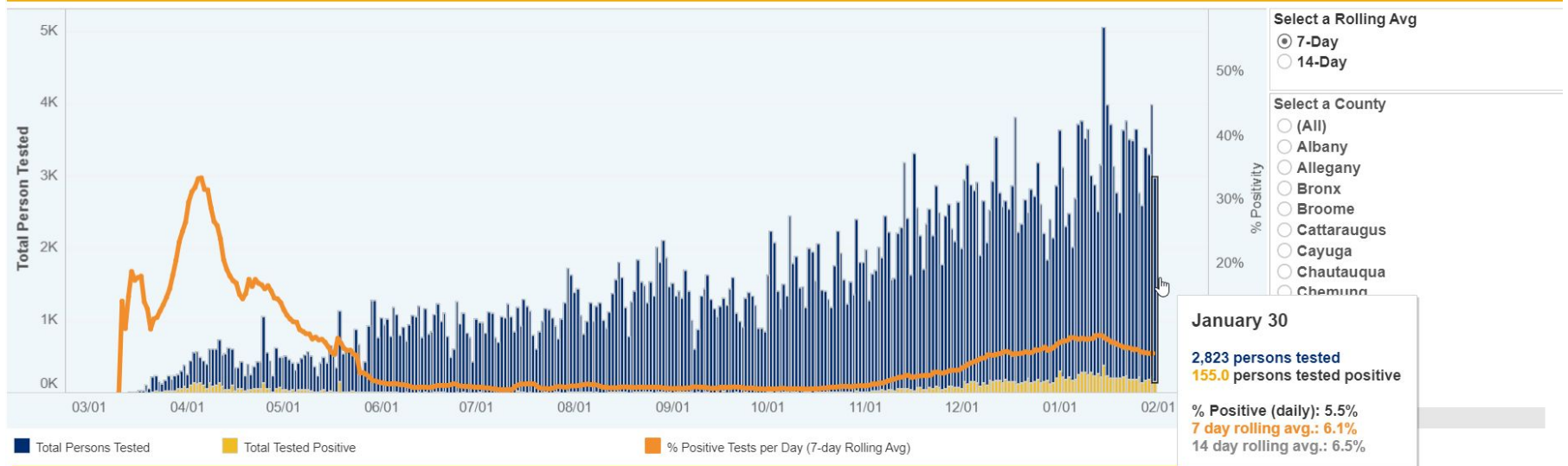
## Test Results - Yesterday

|            |          | Total Persons Tested | Total Tested Positive | % Positive, Yesterday | % Positive, 7-day Avg |
|------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mid-Hudson | Dutchess | 3,300                | 190                   | 5.8%                  | 7.0%                  |

# January 30, 2021

## % Positive Results Over Time - Dutchess

Testing data as of: 1/30/2021  
Testing data last updated on: 1/31/2021



## Test Results - Yesterday

|            |          | Total Persons Tested | Total Tested Positive | % Positive, Yesterday | % Positive, 7-day Avg |
|------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mid-Hudson | Dutchess | 2,823                | 155                   | 5.5%                  | 6.1%                  |

- ☐ Franklin
- ☐ Fulton
- ☐ Genesee
- ☐ Greene
- ☐ Hamilton
- ☐ Herkimer

# Quarantining



- Research suggests that if someone tests positive in a household, there is at least a 40 percent chance of someone else in the house testing positive. [See CDC - Transmission of Covid in Households](#). Our school nurses have been seeing a rise in household transmission rates, specifically from parent to child. Our Nassau nurse reports more small children testing positive than in the past, which used to be rare. At Todd, more students have tested positive in the month of January than in September, October, and November, combined.

## **Students Who Tested Positive for COVID**

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <b>September</b> | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>October</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>November</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>December</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>January</b>   | <b>15</b> |

- Because we're a smaller district, you really see the effects of COVID spread like you would not see in a larger district. A single exposure at Spackenkill could reach all buildings, while not being the case in a larger district.

# Important Changes in Quarantining



- Recent changes in DBCH quarantining guidance
  - Quarantining is currently **10 days**, which is a shift from the DBCH's original guidance of 14 days.
  - **Nuanced Quarantining** - we can work with DBCH to determine if some contacts do not have to quarantine.
  - Key points - **six feet apart, 10 minutes, mask wearing**
  - Always remember to wear your mask and stay socially distanced. However, the DBCH could still call for quarantining.

# Actions to Help Avoid Quarantining

- Staff not having in-person meetings.
- Staff not eating lunch together.
- We continue all of our social distancing protocols, including mask wearing and hand washing.
- Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible.
- Reduce children's movement in buildings and discourage sharing of items. Bathroom usage controlled and monitored.
- Implement online Kindergarten and district-wide registration in February 2021.



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# Hagan Case Study

- It's not the necessarily the number of positive cases that cause us to go remote. Rather, it's the number of persons (students and staff) who may have to quarantine because of exposure to a positive case. The district has closely followed the DBCH guidance as well as that of our school medical director.

- A **single** positive case can have a ripple effect that extends across the district, as was the case recently at Hagan:

In total, 14 Hagan staff, 36 Hagan students, 3 Nassau staff, 27 Nassau students, 5 Todd staff, 12 Todd students, 2 high school staff, and 4 High School students, plus 1 bus driver, for a TOTAL OF 104 persons, had to quarantine. ***And this was just one incident.*** Yet we were able to remain open. If we had two of these incidents in the district to contend with, it would have likely been impossible to stay in-person.



# Elementary Hybrid Schedule



- Our priorities at the elementary level, from the very beginning, have been:

*(1) to create a safe environment for students and staff,*

*(2) to develop a sustainable, hybrid schedule that allowed for daily, substantive contact and maximized core instruction time with a student's primary teacher,*

*(3) to develop a schedule that would be more easily transferable (for both families and staff) if it became necessary to move to and from a full remote model*

*(4) to deliver high quality instruction to the best of our ability, whether in-person or remotely,*

*(5) to add in-person instruction time when we could safely do so*

- ***Our priorities remain the same.***

# Elementary Hybrid Schedule - Cont.



- Recent communication received related to the amount of in-person time in our Hybrid I schedule
- Comparisons with other Districts' Hybrid Plans
- Safety - Schools have remained open. See next slide.
- Is our lens different now than at the beginning of the year? Have our priorities shifted, even slightly?
- Challenging Questions

# Dutchess Districts that Went Remote in January

**Arlington**—entire district first week; Arthur S. May, Titusville Intermediate, West Road, Arlington HS

**Beacon**—Glenham, South Avenue, J.V. Forrestal, Rombout MS, Beacon HS

**BOCES Salt Point Center**—K-8

**Dover**—entire district first week; Wingdale, Dover Elementary, Dover MS, Dover HS

**Hyde Park**—Violet Avenue, FDR HS, Netherwood

**Millbrook**—entire district first week; Millbrook HS

**Pine Plains**—Cold Spring, Seymour Smith, Stissing Mountain HS

**Pawling**—Pawling MS and Pawling HS

**Poughkeepsie**—entire district still remote: Early Learning Center Elementary, Krieger, Morse, Warring, Poughkeepsie MS, Poughkeepsie HS

**Red Hook**—Mill Road, Linden Avenue MS, Red Hook HS

**Rhinebeck**—entire district second week: Livingstone Elementary, Bulkeley MS, Rhinebeck HS

**Wappingers**—Vassar Road, Evans, Fishkill Elementary, Fishkill Plains, Gayhead, Myers Corners, Sheafe Road, Wappingers JH, Van Wyck JH, John Jay HS, RCK HS

**Webutuck**—entire district first, second, and third weeks: Eugene Brooks, Webutuck ES, Webutuck HS

# Attendance in Hybrid 1



- Spackenkill's K-8 in-person hybrid and full remote attendance has been excellent.
- Superintendents throughout Dutchess County are seeing more high school students participating remotely vs in-person. The same trend is found at Spackenkill High School.
- Why?
- The increase of HS students attending remotely could open up spots at the high school on both Hybrid 1 in-person days for students in need. Please contact a guidance counselor or Mr. Malkischer.



# Hybrid 2 and Shortened Weeks

- Week of January 18 was a “shortened” week because of the Martin Luther King holiday.
- Week of January 25 was a shortened week at the high school, where we used Thursday for in-school attendance to replace Tuesday, which we are using for students taking the PSAT. We used Friday to replace in-school attendance on Wednesday, which was remote due to weather.
- Week of February 1 is a shortened week due to weather and the following two weeks include two holidays (Friday, February 12, and Monday, February 15).
- After the Presidents Day holiday, we will have a string of five consecutive five-day weeks, which could logistically fit a move to Hybrid 2 on February 22. This timeframe coincides with the return of area colleges to in-person classes, which they based on scientific guidance from the medical community.

# Area Colleges



Focusing on getting through January and February

## **Marist College**

Remote classes start February 15

In-person hybrid starts March 1

## **Vassar College**

hybrid starts February 17 for those on campus with many  
students off campus

# So What's Next?

Return to School Committee will continue to meet

Goals: increase in-person while remaining safe and following guidelines, including social distancing requirements

“The low rates of transmission in the school setting that have been observed is contingent on the measures that were put into place e.g. the 6 ft distancing, masking, etc. and it is critical at this time to maintain these measures in order to continue the low rates of transmission and keep the schools open.” - Westchester County DOH, same sentiment DBCH

# So What's Next?

We will be adding in-person instruction to our current hybrid schedule by adding in-person instruction on Wednesdays for grades K-5 on Wednesday - Begins February 24th.

Secondary schools also begin Hybrid II schedule the week of February 22nd

Focus on our youngest students - determining the feasibility of increasing in-person time first at the K/1 Levels, and then Grades 2 & 3 after that, **while still following the current social distancing requirements**



# K-1 Full Days for Both Cohorts - Parent Survey

- Exploring the feasibility of full days for Grades K & 1
- Space; smallest cohorts; youngest students
- Projected Start Date - As early as **February 22 or March 1st**
- Survey K/1 Parents - Survey Window - This Wednesday to Friday at 12:00
- Parents will be asked to indicate whether or not they would choose for their K/1 child to be full-time in-person or full remote (if full in-person days are feasible); Commitment is for the remainder of the school year
- An instruction model change (hybrid/in-person to full remote or vice versa) = change in teacher

# Vaccinations Update



- Our staff is seeking the COVID-19 vaccination, but most have not been able to secure a date.
- Given the difficulty people are having with scheduling vaccination appointments, as well as the required interval between doses (Moderna - 28 Days; Pfizer - 21 Days), and the time following the second dose (Moderna - 2 weeks; Pfizer - 1 week), we are unsure of the timetable for vaccinations.
- Spackenkill UFSD indicated we would be a site for vaccinations
- LHCSS is advocating for vaccinations of teachers; released statement

# Vaccinations Update



- DBCH has indicated that a vaccination rate of 80%-85% is a benchmark for the country to reach that would signal a return to more normalcy and hopefully the removal of social distancing rules.
- We are getting weekly updates from the DBCH as to vaccine information in Dutchess County. "Stay Patient."



# Hope vs. Obstacles

We have been encountering obstacles at every step since last spring, when we first had to go remote. Still, we were back in school in September through December. Hope has been driving us forward. This pandemic will not last forever, although it feels like it will sometimes.

## **There is hope for our goal for more in-person time:**

Students and staff adhering to guidelines

Knowledge gained since September

No loss of hybrid in-person days since return

Rates possibly going down

Vaccinations started; we need the community to be vaccinated with two doses

Change of quarantine guidance

Work with DBCH

Hybrid 2 - February 22

K - 1 Survey

Balancing act - Health and Safety

# Thank you

