

NORTH TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
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Gregory J. Woytila
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Lumberjack families and guardians,

One of the difficulties we have faced this year is working within the confines of the quarantine guidelines from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the Niagara County Department of Health (NCDOH). Those initial guidelines stated that we needed to quarantine any individual who was in the same room with a contagious COVID-19 person for 60 minutes or more, cumulative, throughout the course of one school day. This obviously resulted in a large number of quarantines for students and staff throughout the school year (400+).

After a few months of reviewing data, the local superintendents presented information about the lack of spread of COVID-19 within the schools and asked for adjustments to be made to these quarantine guidelines. Simply put, we were quarantining large numbers of students and staff members and they were rarely turning positive during the 14-day quarantine period from the close contact at school. This is probably due to a number of factors, but most notably that we have been very diligent about social distancing and wearing masks at North Tonawanda City School District.

I'm happy to report that the NCDOH has altered their quarantine guidelines. Effective immediately, we will only be quarantining individuals who were **within 6 ft. or less with a contagious COVID-19 person for 10 or more consecutive minutes** (regardless of whether either party was wearing a mask). This guidance now closely reflects the quarantine guidance from the CDC. In addition, if students or staff do need to quarantine, the quarantine will span 10 days as opposed to the previous rule of 14 days.

Since students in all of our classes are socially distanced (6 ft. or more) and wear masks, the result of this change will be significant. We will see much less student and staff quarantines, which will keep more students and staff members in school. I'm so proud of the efforts of our staff and students in containing this virus during this unprecedented school year.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Woytila
NT School Superintendent