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October 15, 2020

Dear Families;

We have our first few weeks in the books on the 2020-21 school year. We have experienced a little normalcy with the beginning of soccer season, and we are beginning to hit our stride with our current modified schedule. BCS is grateful for the commitment and support of families and the community as we work through inconvenient scheduling and requirements. Despite the inconveniences, these are all very important and very necessary to keep our kids physically here in school. We can't stress more the importance of routine handwashing, maintaining social distancing practices, and the wearing of face coverings when distancing can't be maintained. Our kids have been great at this and we as adults need to do the same when at our schools and athletic contests.

Allegany County has experienced an increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases. While most of these are directly related to a nursing facility, the arms of this go beyond the nursing home into various communities across the region. Just this week we have witnessed area schools closing for at least a day to ensure adequate contact tracing and to clean. While we are proud of our reopening and are confident in the safety protocols that are in place, we are keenly aware that cases and potential closures could occur in Belfast at any moment. With that in mind, our plan given a school closure connected to COVID-19 **would be an automatic and immediate shift to remote learning**. BCS has created plans for both a short term or long term closure.

Remote Learning Plans for Closure

Short Term Closure	1-2 Days	Students will follow their regular in-person/ remote schedule for the day. Students will have Zoom sessions for classes that would be in-person for the day.
Long Term Closure	3+ Days	Students will follow the 100% remote plan for the grade/ class. The complete schedule (without individual interventions) will be posted on the District webpage to help clarify expectations.

In the event there is a closure, please know that there is not an exact script for us to follow. Decisions will be made with direct consultation with the Allegany County Department of Health and based on their recommendations. Decisions on if we close will be based on if there is a case connected to the school, who had contact with a positive case, how many people could have been exposed, the date when an exposure occurred, the infection rate in the community, along with a whole host of other details. If and when this occurs, we will be as quick as possible to communicate with you as much information as we can provide to help you plan.

With all of this, we are committed and prepared to provide the children of the Belfast School District with the best education possible regardless of whether it is inside our walls, on Zoom, Teams, SeeSaw or Flipgrid. Please remain in communication with your child's teachers to help stay current and encourage your child to bring needed materials (including their iPad) back and forth to school each day. We thank you all in advance for helping your child understand and follow the health protocols that are in place. Together we will work through this pandemic.

Sincerely,

 Wendy Butler Ed.D.
 Superintendent