



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DSEA President Demands Greater Transparency from State Regarding COVID Data

“On November 16th, we issued a call for increased oversight from the Governor’s Office to assure that school districts were doing all they could to abide by health and safety guidelines issued by Department of Education and Division of Public Health. This call was precipitated by the drastic and dramatic rise in the number and rate of infections. As we noted then, the Department of Health and Social Services’ website, MyHealthyCommunities.com, showed significant increases in new case rate and % tests positive. We expressed our concern that those statistics paired with us heading into the holiday season traditionally marked by family gatherings could result in the continued rise in new cases and % positive tests. Unfortunately, what concerned us then, confronts us now.

Yesterday, the State released data for the most recent reporting period, November 21st – 27th, which revealed the following statewide increases for the last two weeks:

- New case rate per 100,000 people – from 216.7 to 337.7
- % of tests that are positive – from 5.4 to 6.1
- Average daily hospitalizations per 100,000 people – from 12.9 to 19.2

For the first time, one of our three counties, Kent County, experienced rates that placed it in the red school planning scenario based on significant community spread. We commend those districts – Caesar Rodney, Capital and Milford – that made the difficult decision to return to remote learning (even momentarily) to allow time to assess how and when schools can operate safely with some amount of in person learning. We encourage those districts that did not take such action to give serious consideration to return to remote learning to allow for a similar assessment on their part.

We have been told that our schools are a safe place to be. Stop telling us and start showing us by sharing all data and information regarding positive cases connected to schools, the results of contact tracing in terms of the number of identified close contacts required to quarantine and a clear indication of whether any transmission is occurring within our schools. It is also time for the state and districts to double down on their commitment to comply with all health and safety directives.

As we noted in our November 16th statement, many districts are looking to expand the number of students being brought into the building for in-person learning. Given the continuing increase in new cases and percentage of tests that are positive, we are calling on all districts, at a minimum, to stop the expansion of in person learning until our data returns to more acceptable levels.

Finally, we have two questions for Governor Carney. What will happen if the statewide data continues to increase to the point where Delaware is in the red and experiencing significant community spread? Will school buildings close and will we return to remote learning only as currently indicated on MyHealthyCommunities.com? Educators, students, their families and their communities have the right to know what to expect, and more importantly, what to prepare for. We need the time to ensure a smooth transition back to remote learning, which is exactly where the data shows us heading.”

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