

Poland Regional High School

School Board Report

January 2021

Staff Updates

While we have not had any cases of virus transmission within the school, staff who are required to quarantine is our biggest challenge to remaining in school for in-person instruction. Typically, a COVID 19 positive test for a student/teacher results in the quarantining of about 5 teachers and 25-30 students. This is something we can overcome with teachers and administrators covering for those quarantined teachers. A second positive case, that may result in another 5 teachers quarantined, is when we have been forced to move to full remote. Ten teachers, with the unknown of other staff members calling out sick or with planned medical or personal days, leaves us vulnerable to inappropriately low levels of supervision. This was the case during the week of December 7th. While we started the week thinking that we would miss just one day of in-person instruction, a second positive test result shut us down. The change from a 14-day quarantine to 10 days will help tremendously. Of course, lower levels of community transmission would help the most!

On the topic of quarantined teachers, I'd like to share with you just two examples of how hard the teachers at the high school (like in every school) are working to keep students engaged and learning. Dan Novak, a social studies teacher, was part of the first quarantined group of teachers after Thanksgiving. He was trying to juggle being in quarantine and teaching remotely, as well as transporting his own child to school. He ended up teaching his last class from his car on the grass outside of the band room to be able to get on the WIFI, and also take his child home at the end of the day. Deb Downing, math teacher, was also part of the first quarantined group. On the day we had no power, Deb had no internet and so was unable to teach remotely. She drove to school, parked outside of the maintenance door, accessed the WIFI from her car and was able to make sure she posted assignments for her students, read and answered emails from them, and kept them on pace.

Teaching and Learning

We are working on improving our attendance on days when students are remote. We ask remote students to sign in each morning by completing a short questionnaire. Many students have not been completing the questionnaire, and it has been causing our absent attendance rate to balloon. After Thanksgiving, Roundtable teachers began a weekly email to students and families with a report on their attendance and what students need to do to improve it. We will be reviewing our data after several weeks to see if this intervention makes a difference.

Facilities & Safety

Siemens has begun replacing lights in the high school, and teachers are loving the new fixtures and ability to control the lighting with more precision.

Events/Activities

Winter sports has begun remotely, with coaches connecting with their athletes and providing workout and motivational activities. Crossing our fingers for a Green designation at some point. Here is a list of co-curricular activities we are trying to run so far this year:

Civil Rights Team	WPRH (3 students)	One Act Play (14 students)
Student Government (32 students)	Yearbook (9 students)	Student Judiciary Board (12 students)
Math Team (10 students)	Speech and Debate (10 students)	Student Ambassadors (8 students)
Knight Writer (school news website) (6 students)	Theatre (10 students)	