



Port Allegany School District

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Superintendent / Business Manager
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August 23, 2022

Dear Families,

I trust that you and your family had a wonderful summer. As the district finalizes preparation for the start of a new school year, I wanted to share two quick updates with you.

First, as you are aware the CDC has recently lifted most of the pandemic related mitigation guidance for schools. Gone are the days of social distancing, quarantining, limiting capacity at extracurricular events, and the related. As a result of this return to normalcy, the district will no longer be live streaming classes during the upcoming school year. Should your child(ren) miss school for any reason during the school year, please contact their teacher(s) to make up any missed assignments.

Second, this summer the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) partnered with Rhithm <http://rhithm.app> in offering a student wellness check-in tool for schools. The Rhithm app is a daily, emoji based, check-in tool that provides responsive support in just a couple of minutes. Students respond to five questions around Mental, Energy, Emotional, Physical, and Social wellness. Results of this private check-in will be shared with district administration, guidance counselors, and with individual teachers when necessary. The goal of these individual check-ins is to help the school provide support for any demonstrated student need.

The district will begin using the Rhithm app after the Labor Day holiday beginning with grades 6 and 7. Students will complete their check-ins three times per week during their homeroom period. In successive weeks additional grade levels will be added at the elementary school and the high school. Although this program is not mandatory, we do ask parents to encourage their child(ren) to participate. As with other school processes, should your child demonstrate any area of concern with these check-ins, parents will be notified. We have included an additional flier with more information about this program.

Please feel free to contact me or your child's building principal with any questions or concerns. We look forward to a successful school year.

Respectfully,

Gary Buchsen, Superintendent