



bh communitywatch <bhcommunitywatch1@gmail.com>

Fwd: Current learning loss due to district quarantine policy

1 message

Laura Kapuscinski <lkap@icloud.com>
To: bhcommunitywatch1@gmail.com

Sat, Oct 8, 2022 at 5:11 PM

From: Laura Kapuscinski <>
Subject: Re: Current learning loss due to district quarantine policy
Date: October 5, 2022 at 12:28:30 PM EDT
To: "Varley, Dr. Melissa" <mvarley@bhpsnj.org>, BOE Sai Bhargavi Akiri <sbhargavi@bhpsnj.org>, BOE Foregger <tforegger@bhpsnj.org>, Robert Cianciulli <rcianciulli@bhpsnj.org>, "Young, Joy" <jyoung@bhpsnj.org>, Jordan Hyman <jhyman@bhpsnj.org>, "Stanley, Pamela" <pstanley@bhpsnj.org>
Cc: Michael D'Aquila <mdaquila@bhpsnj.org>, Angela Penna <apenna@bhpsnj.org>

Good afternoon!

Wanted to bring this to the top of our inbox, please reply at your earliest convenience.

Thanks.

-Laura

On Sep 20, 2022, at 2:36 PM, Laura Kapuscinski wrote:

Thanks so much for your quick reply!

While I appreciate you taking the time to provide me with a detailed reply, the issue is that children are essentially being "forced" to stay home and miss instruction because of a policy from this district that states a child who tests positive must remain home for a minimum of 5 days regardless of their symptoms. Comparing pre-pandemic to post-pandemic is not a fair evaluation as we have never had policy mandating when our kids can and can not attend school.

1) I'm unclear how a livestream "takes away" from a

class as it essentially is a camera in the room showing a live feed. Can you please advise?

2) With respect to children who are out for long periods, they are doing so because of an underlying reason, not a district policy prohibiting their attendance and inability to learn during that time. **Providing a solution for children who are not given the option to attend school in person because of a test result has nothing to do with equity, it's about ensuring each and every student is supported and provided with an opportunity to thrive.** Closing the door for discussing viable options to keep our students engaged, educated and on track is failing our students.

4) **Can you provide data from the research conducted illustrating that students in grades 6-12 voiced that live-streaming didn't work. Was this during the pandemic when we were all remote, or during hybrid learning?** I would beg to argue that a child would benefit from observing a math teacher provide instruction in solving complex equation over having no instruction. We aren't talking about 1 day - we are talking about 5-10 days of learning loss; that is about 3.5 hours each of math, science, social studies, English, etc per quarantine.

What I was hoping to achieve with my email was some sort of open dialogue. I know there is not a perfect answer or solution to any problem. In this particular case the district is forcing children with covid to miss out on instruction. While a livestream might not be the best solution, it certainly seems like one that could and would work until the policy is abolished or we come up with a better plan. We are all going to have to learn to live with Covid, because it's not going away. I would hope you and the admin team, along with the BOE would be in constant communication about ensuring we are doing the best to educate our children. It's not going to be perfect but anything would be better than nothing.

Thank you for your time and I do hope you all, as a team, looking out for all of our children will discuss this.

Many thanks,

Laura

PS I just wanted to state that I am not and have not had issues with a particular teacher, they constantly go above and beyond for our kids. The problem is with the policy and the willful disregard to address and perhaps, understand, that learning loss is a direct product of the policy.

On Sep 20, 2022, at 1:58 PM, Varley, Dr. Melissa <mvarley@bhpsnj.org> wrote:

Dear Ms. Kapuscinski,

I did forward your email to the administrative team as well as to members of the BHEA to ensure that we are still providing assignments and assistance via Google classroom. They have assured me that all student assignments are addressed 6-12 via google classroom and that teachers in K-5 have different methods to make sure our students do not fall behind (some of our K-5 teachers also use Google classroom).

Local Superintendents met this summer to discuss the option of remote instruction and we also met with our respective associations and administrative teams. In these discussions, several points were brought up. 1) By a teacher having to livestream, it takes away from the students in the classroom. 2) We have students who are out for long periods of time (some much longer than the covid quarantines) and we do not offer remote instruction for those students (where is the equity?). 3) Our teachers are always available to help students catch up and get them where they need to be. 4) Our students in grades 6-12 voiced that livestreaming didn't work unless the teacher was giving direct instruction, which many of our teachers do not engage in. In all grade levels, we encourage our teachers to do more small

group, station teaching, and collaborative work. Therefore; as a group, we decided to have our schools revert to the way it was pre pandemic and not offer remote instruction.

If you're having issues with a specific teacher, the chain of command would be to go to that teacher and try to get resolution.

Sincerely,

Melissa Varley

On Tue, Sep 20, 2022 at 11:45 AM Laura Kapuscinski <> wrote:
Good morning,

I would like to ask you to discuss and address a very serious problem facing all of our children this year; that is the CURRENT learning loss due to the districts updated Covid quarantine policy. The policy itself is not terrible; 5-day at home quarantine for Covid positive students, even if they have no symptoms. The issue is the complete loss of learning for all of our students, in particular our students in grades 6-12.

I would like to ask the Board, in collaboration with the administration, to propose an updated quarantine policy that allows for students that are Covid positive and home for 5 days to be able to receive instruction in the form of a livestream link - not zoom, no back-and-forth, just the ability to listen to instruction and stay on pace with their class.

Let's be honest, COVID is not over and there are currently significant outbreaks at most of our schools. For the most part children are experiencing mild, if any, symptoms making them more than capable of watching a livestream to assist them in completing work posted to Google Classroom. While I don't think the livestream model is ideal for grades k-5, I do think it is a viable option for grades 6-12

and I would propose we start this sooner than later.

If the decision is to not offer some sort of remote learning option, what is the plan for the learning loss for those children who are essentially banned from learning for 5-day periods. As many of you are aware, having older students, a great deal of material is covered in a single day, let alone a 5-day period. Forcing a mostly healthy child to remain home for 5-days with zero instruction is not an acceptable plan to ensure we are providing a fair opportunity for all of our students to thrive - we can definitely do better.

Thank you for seriously considering updating the policy and making changes so that we can put an end to anymore learning loss due to Covid.

Thank you,
Laura Kapuscinski

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Dr. Melissa Varley
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