

AUTISM SERVICES, INC.



AUTISM-SERVICES-INC.ORG

November 10, 2020

Dear Parents, Families, and Caregivers,

As of November 9, 2020, both of Autism Services' schools in Buffalo and Amherst are located within a "yellow zone." You may recall that Governor Cuomo's cluster zone strategy requires specific action as a result.

Governor Cuomo's micro-cluster strategy allows schools in a yellow zone to potentially remain open for in-person instruction. However, to do so, each school will need to randomly identify and test 20% of the students and staff. This testing must occur weekly. If our schools cannot meet these testing parameters, we must end in-person instruction and pivot to fully remote instruction.

Despite repeated contact with the Erie County Department of Health and the New York State Department of Health, and multiple requests for assistance, we have been unable to obtain any guidance or assistance in complying with yellow zone testing requirements. Not only have we been provided with no information regarding how to obtain tests for our students and staff, we have many questions regarding the selection of a 20% testing sample that remain unanswered. As a result, we are unable to share additional information with our students' families at this time.

Without the necessary guidance and resources from the Department of Health, it is highly unlikely that Autism Services will be able to comply with state testing requirements. Therefore, all families, staff, and students should prepare for the possibility of shifting to entirely remote instruction, beginning on November 16, 2020.

As always, we will continue to issue official closure notices through major news outlets and postings on our agency website at: www.autism-services-inc.org. Please do not hesitate to reach out directly if you have any further questions. In the time ahead, we will not stop advocating for our students. We will continue to push for guidance and support from local and state officials, so that we may meet the new regulations given to us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Shanahan".

Andrew Shanahan
Education Director
Autism Services, Inc.
716-631-5777 x222