



**BOROUGH OF WEST CHESTER**  
PENNSYLVANIA

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Date: October 4, 2020  
Subject: State of Emergency, Reopening of West Chester Schools

On Friday, I issued a State of Emergency declaration in order to create temporary requirements to contain the spread of COVID-19 within the Borough of West Chester. These include mask-wearing requirements and limitations on gathering sizes in private residences.

These requirements are driven by the data. Since March, 504 Borough residents have been reported as COVID-19 positive, and almost half of these cases were reported just in the last 30 days. The vast majority of these infections are occurring in the rental community within the Borough and among 18- to 22-year-olds. Anyone with COVID-19, whether symptomatic or not, can be highly infectious and can therefore spread the virus to others.

The measures in my State of Emergency, as enforced by the West Chester Police Department, are intended to slow viral spread and contain it to these isolated areas of the Borough. Mask-wearing and distancing are the most effective measures we now have, and mask-wearing by 80% of the population is much more effective than a total economic shutdown.

Given that the infections remain relatively isolated, and that the WCPD and I are taking measures to contain viral spread and protect public health, I support the West Chester Area School District's current plan to move to hybrid instruction. When we as a community work together to protect each other by wearing masks and distancing when we are not wearing masks, we will be able to reopen our schools safely.

I am extremely grateful to every member of the West Chester community for participating in these simple measures in support of the WCASD's reopening plan so our students can learn together safely, we can protect our valued educators, and our business community, our friends, our neighbors, and our family members can be safe.

Dianne Herrin  
Mayor