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Nilesh Kalyanaraman, M.D., F.A.C.P.
Health Officer

November 13, 2020

Dear Nonpublic School Leadership:

COVID-19 continues to impact crucial elements of our day-to-day lives. Currently, Anne Arundel County is experiencing a surge in COVID-19 cases. Cases in the county are at heights that we have not previously experienced and the case rate is increasing daily. As of November 12, the case rate is 23.5. The case rate is defined as the number of cases in the county per day per 100,000 population, averaged over 7 days.

The risk of COVID-19 spreading in a school is directly related to the level of COVID-19 spread in the community and safety measures in schools. Current data shows that COVID-19 cases attributed to exposure in schools have been low. However, maintaining low levels of in-school transmissions will become more difficult with the growth in cases we are experiencing, leading to more disruptions in learning.

We have reviewed the data for COVID-19 cases in private schools, information on classroom size and age distribution of in-person learning of private schools in the county, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) reopening framework, modeling from the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and contact tracing data. **In order to keep students and staff safe, the Department of Health does not recommend in-person instruction at case rates of 15 or higher.** We instead recommend that schools return to full virtual instruction while the Department of Health monitors the situation to identify a safer opportunity to reopen schools to in-person instruction.

The Department of Health will need to be informed of the current status of your institution. **By November 20, 2020, email Karen Siska-Creel at hdsisk00@aacounty.org with your decisions to return to fully virtual learning, modifications to in-person instruction or plans to remain at your current level of in-person instruction.** For further information and updates, visit the [Back To School](#) section of the Department of Health website.

We look forward to partnering with you to ensure the healthy development of our children while keeping them and your staff safe during this pandemic.

In Health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Kalyanaraman".

Nilesh Kalyanaraman, MD, FACP
Health Officer