

A DIFFICULT LIFESAVING DECISION

Lives have been saved and permanent physical injury prevented as a result of the very difficult and widely misunderstood decision to have Buffalo students taught virtually.

The statistics in the December 15, 2020 *Buffalo News*, show the opposite of what *The Buffalo News* and others, wish to have people believe.

As a result of the decision to have students taught fully remotely, the positivity rate of Buffalo School District students is “the lowest rate of any school district in Erie and Niagara County” (0.1%).

And “teachers and other staff in the city’s schools also had fewer cases of COVID-19 on a percentage basis than their counterparts in 37 other local school districts” (0.6%).

Indeed, according to *The Buffalo News*, 1.2% of Holland’s and Clarence’s student population tested positive this fall, 1.5% of Lewiston Porter’s students and 1.4% of Starpoint’s students tested positive.

The average percentage of students testing positive for COVID-19, excluding Buffalo, in *The Buffalo News* study is .773%, where in Buffalo it is .1%!

The average percentage of teachers testing positive for COVID-19, excluding Buffalo, in *The Buffalo News* study is 2.56%, whereas in Buffalo it is .6%.

If just the average .773% of our 30,000 students (232) and 2.56% of our 3900 teachers (100) tested positive, 332 COVID-19 cases would be spread throughout our community instead of 53 cases using the Buffalo School’s rate of infection.

In addition to the lives saved, and physical harm averted by making the very difficult decision to have our students taught virtually, just think of the deadly and harmful spread of the COVID-19 virus that would have been spread in the community.

Comments like those of Buffalo Common Councilmember Christopher Scanlon in his letter to the Superintendent that in person learning “does not appear to be a priority” are an insult to the Superintendent, School Board, District staff and teachers.

As I stated in my response to him, “teachers, and I am confident the others mentioned above, think constantly about having our students return.

It is indeed ‘a priority’.

However, the health and safety of our students, parents, staff and community must also be the priority of those who really care about our community.”

“Our teachers, as are parents, are under far more stress and working much longer hours because they want to ensure that our students receive the best education possible, while ensuring that they, their parents, staff and community remain safe. This is also true of the Superintendent, Board of Education and administrators.

Anyone who makes a decision that causes the death or physical harm to a person(s) should have to explain their decision to their families.”