



Larry A. Hewitt, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

December 18, 2021

Dear District 28 Families,

Thank you for your encouragement and support in the face of incredible challenges this year. The Board of Education and I are so proud of our students, staff and families. Together, we have faced a lot of unknowns with determination and the conviction to give our very best.

With Winter Break upon us, I am highlighting for our in-person families a few important items to prepare for 2021. As you review this information, please remember that we are trying to remain in-person for as long as possible and to avoid a second-semester pivot to remote instruction. Everyone's vigilance, determination, and commitment is essential.

Preparing for January 19 - Limiting Exposure to Others

All students resume remote learning on January 4. Those who selected in-person for the second semester will transition from remote on January 19. The 14 days after winter break provide a natural quarantine period for every student and staff member returning to our school buildings. If we minimize exposure to others for those two weeks, then the likelihood that we can resume school without bringing the virus with us increases dramatically. The more we can do to keep the virus at bay, the greater our odds of remaining onsite.

Travel Quarantine

Students traveling out-of-state must complete a 14-day quarantine period before returning to in-person instruction. **Students must return to Illinois by January 4 in order to attend school in-person on January 19.** The district is not adopting the shortened 10-day period that the CDC has identified as an option. The gold standard is 14 days and as long as the positivity rates remain high, we will continue to follow this guidance. If at some point in the future, the positivity rate dips below 5%, we will reevaluate the 10-day option.

Health Certification Resumes January 5

Tracking our internal health metrics is a vital part of our monitoring process. Therefore, even though we are not returning onsite until January 19, the health certification process will resume on Tuesday, January 5. Prior to inviting students and staff back, we must know who is experiencing symptoms and who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Getting back into the habit of the daily morning health survey will also help ensure our system is working properly and that January 19 will run as smoothly as possible.

Reporting COVID-19 to School Nurses

Please continue to communicate with your school's nurse as the district is still required to report positive cases of COVID-19 to the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH). Additionally, those who have recovered from COVID-19 will have some level of immunity and, if authorized by CCDPH, may not need to be quarantined if they become a close contact to someone who tests positive. However, we must have accurate records in order to potentially excuse a student from a future quarantine. Therefore, if your child or a family member had a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 between November 21 and December 18 and you have not informed your school's nurse, please do so via email. Likewise, if your child or a family member is diagnosed with COVID-19 between December 19 and January 4, please email the school nurse. Beginning January 5, families will be able to resume calling the school nurse at school.

Closing Thoughts

As I stated in August, I don't know if we're going to be onsite for two days, two weeks, or two months, but we're going to do everything we can to keep in-person instruction up and running for the rest of the school year. Your assistance has been and will continue to be vital to our success.

To all of our families, the Board of Education and I wish you a restful and peaceful winter break and holiday season.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry A. Hewitt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Larry A. Hewitt,
Superintendent of Schools