

Dear Palos 118,

We have several important items in this week's update. Let me first begin with the school district's status update. As a reminder, each week I will be updating the community on the status of some of the variables that may require us to revisit in-person instruction. This week's status update is below.

1. **A return to Phase 3 of the Governor's Restore Illinois Plan**
Suburban Cook County remains in Phase 4, which allows schools to resume in-person instruction. The test positivity seven-day rolling average is 5.6% for our region (Region 10 on 7/30/20). Source: Governor's Office and IDPH
2. **Outbreaks of confirmed COVID-19 cases in schools**
Most Illinois schools are scheduled to resume in August. Source: Palos 118
3. **Confirmed community spread of the virus**
There is no confirmed widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the Palos area. Source: IDPH
4. **Directives from IDPH, ISBE or the Governor's Office**
There have been no new directives regarding school reopening issued by IDPH, ISBE or the Governor's Office. Source: IDPH, ISBE, Governor's Office
5. **District 118 Staffing**
The school district continues to watch staffing closely.
 - Approximately 50% of substitutes indicated they will not return next year.
 - We still have openings for custodial positions and elementary support staff.
 - Five teachers have inquired about a possible leave of absence.
 - One teacher resigned.
 - Two teachers retired.

Source: District 118

The school district cannot open schools without adequate staff or if the positivity rate rises to an unsafe level. It is imperative families plan to continue to contemplate multiple childcare options, including the possibility of five days a week care if the school district is forced to open with a remote-only program.

Notification of Group Assignments

Parents will be notified of their child's group assignment next week. Students assigned to Group A will attend in-person instruction on Monday and Tuesday. Students assigned to Group B will attend in-person instruction on Thursday and Friday. Due to the size of our school district and the complexity of scheduling, it is impossible to accommodate requests for specific group assignments.

Homeschool Notification

If you intend to homeschool your child for the 2020-2021 school year, you must withdraw your child from school. Please email Yvonne Leschkies at yleschkies@palos118.org to notify the school district of your intent to homeschool. We ask that you kindly notify us as soon as possible. This information is critical to us for completing class assignments and finalizing staffing patterns. Information regarding homeschooling can be found on the Illinois State Board of Education's website at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Homeschool.aspx>.

Transportation Notification

If your child WILL NOT be utilizing bus transportation next school year, please email our Transportation Coordinator Mary Meyer at mmeyer@palos118.org and inform her of your decision by Friday, August 7. You can also call 708-448-4405. In order to assign bus routes with maximum social distancing on buses, we need to have this information as soon as possible.

Medical Certification for Face Masks

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) mandates all students and staff wear a face mask at all times when in school buildings with the exception of eating or drinking. Only staff and students with a certified medical condition that includes trouble breathing, unconsciousness, and incapacitation or otherwise unable to remove the face mask without assistance qualify for an accommodation per IDPH. If you believe your child qualifies for an accommodation, you must have your physician complete the attached form and return to the school district no later than August

12. The school district will reach out to all families with completed forms to discuss accommodations, which may include remote learning options.

[Medical Certification for Face Masks](#)

Daily Symptom Check Self-Certification Form

Parents are required to fill out a Daily Symptom Check Self-Certification Form every day their child is attending in-person instruction. Students will not be allowed to board the school bus or enter the school without this completed form. Failure to consistently and accurately fill out the self-certification form may result in your student being assigned to a remote-only class for the first quarter. You can view the form here:

[Self-Certification Form](#)

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. This situation remains very fluid. Please continue to read our family updates every Friday for important information. I wish you and your families well as we continue to prepare for the upcoming school year.

Best regards,

Dr. Anthony M. Scarsella
Superintendent of Schools