

Dear Palos 118 Families,

I want to thank everyone who attended one of our informational meetings this week or viewed the information posted online regarding our Modified Full Return Plan. I hope that the information presented will provide all families with the necessary information they need to make an informed election regarding in-person or remote learning, which is due by Monday, September 28. You can access the election form by [clicking on this link](#). All families will have the opportunity to re-elect in-person or remote only. Please remember if you are electing remote-only, you will be assigned to a remote-only program through the first semester which ends February 5. You can access information regarding the return plan by visiting our Return2020 webpage at www.palos118.org/return2020. The video of our September 24 Informational meetings will be available by Monday.

Today marks the end of the third week of remote-only learning in Palos 118. To assist us in assessing the effectiveness of the program, I am asking all parents to [please complete a survey](#) regarding parent and student remote learning experiences. This information will help us in understanding what our families like and dislike about the current program, and how we can improve in the future. Please note, this survey is focused on our current remote-only program and not our revised remote-only program that is outlined in our Modified Full Return Plan. Families electing remote-only beginning October 7 will receive an additional survey for feedback.

This week's metrics:

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. Source: Governor's Office and IDPH

2. **Outbreaks of confirmed COVID-19 cases in schools**

60 of 66 south suburban school districts have decided against in-person instruction to begin the school year. There have been no reported outbreaks in area school districts. Source: ISC-4.

3. **Confirmed community spread of the virus**

There is no confirmed widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the Palos area. This week's "Metrics for School Determination of Community Spread" reported by IDPH include: **Test Positivity is "moderate." New Cases per 100,000 is "moderate." New Cases are "minimal." Youth Cases Increase is "minimal."** 7 Day and 14 Day rolling positivity rates are $\geq 8\%$ for zip codes: 60463, 60464, and 60465 combined.

Source: IDPH <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countyschool?county=Cook>
Northwestern University COVID Dashboard: <http://covid-dashboard.fsm.northwestern.edu/?fbclid=IwAR2B4japHsdZYK2DTIZk1x4xC6-\u0026FMTvbm9f0smgWksluGma9309Aikyf0>

4. **Directives from IDPH, ISBE, or the Governor's Office**

There have been no new directives this week. Source: IDPH

5. **District 118 Staffing**

We have the following external vacancies as of today.

- Daily substitute teachers

As we prepare to return students to school, I am asking our community to be vigilant in practicing good safety precautions to limit the potential for the spread of COVID-19 in our community, which may lead to spread in our schools once they reopen. Please take the following precautions when in public or in large crowds.

**WEAR YOUR MASK
WATCH YOUR DISTANCE
WASH YOUR HANDS
DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE**

These are the four essential safety precautions we will focus on once students return to the classroom. Please help us in keeping our schools open by making these practices routine. Most importantly, please reinforce the proper wearing of face masks over both the nose and the mouth. Additionally, please make sure your child's face masks fit properly to reduce the need to adjust the mask throughout the day. This will reduce the number of times your child touches their face. Thank you for your partnership in keeping our students and our staff safe.

I am proud to serve in a school community that is engaged and passionate about the well-being of its children. We can be leaders in reopening schools during this prolonged pandemic by taking one simple yet essential step. We ALL must take equal responsibility for implementing our safety procedures. We do that by offering ideas and solutions rather than complaints and criticism. We do that by offering our assistance rather than resistance. We do that by sharing information and facts rather than rumors and hearsay. Most importantly, we do that by remembering we are all in this together – student, parent, board member, teacher, support staff, administrator. Together, we will successfully return our students to the classroom.

Enjoy the weekend and stay safe.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anthony M. Scarsella
Superintendent of Schools