



Palos School District 118

8800 W. 119th St. | Palos Park, IL 60464 | 708-448-4800 | www.palos118.org

Dear Palos 118 Families,

It was joyful to see our students return to our schools this week for Meet and Greet Days. Parents, students, and staff did a terrific job adhering to our in-person safety plan. I want to thank parents for filling out symptom forms, our staff for checking temperatures, and students for consistently wearing their masks. As I have said previously, it will take the consistent efforts of our entire school community to reopen our schools for in-person instruction and to keep them open. Tuesday and Wednesday were perfect opportunities to test our safety plan, and I am pleased with the way the school district performed.

In my August 21st message to families, I informed parents for planning purposes to anticipate remote learning to continue through the first quarter of the school year, which ends November 13th. However, my team and I meet daily to explore ways to bring back students safely prior to the end of the quarter. I am pleased to report that the process of returning students began yesterday with our preschool program as well as small groups of our most vulnerable learners. Adequate staffing and the ability to support these students in the event they have to quarantine allowed us to do so. As soon as we can overcome these hurdles in other grade levels, we will begin bringing them back part-time. We are working as quickly as we can, and we appreciate your continued patience.

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 reported outbreaks in several area parochial schools that have suspended in-person instruction. Source: ISC-4.

3. Confirmed community spread of the virus

There is no confirmed widespread transmission of COVID-19 in Palos Park. This week, I will begin reporting recently released "Metrics for School Determination of Community Spread" reported by IDPH. The metrics include Test Positivity, New Cases per 100,000, New Cases

and Youth Case Increase. **Test Positivity is “moderate.” New Cases per 100,000 is “moderate.” New Cases are “minimal.” Youth Cases Increase is “minimal.”**

Source: IDPH

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

Please see above regarding updated IDPH Guidance. Source: IDPH

5. **District 118 Staffing**

The school district continues to work diligently to address our vacancies. We have the following external vacancies as of today.

- Daily substitute teachers
- Long-term substitute teachers
- Paraprofessionals

Yesterday, our students logged on to the first full day of following their remote learning schedules. As expected, we had some minor issues but no system-wide outages or disruptions. Our office support staff and Technology Department worked hard supporting families needing assistance and will continue to provide support throughout remote learning. Our Technology Department asked that I pass along the tips below for parents supporting remote learners.

- Use your school-issued device. If you cannot use your school issued device, contact the Technology Department.
- Log into classes before they are scheduled to begin. Do not wait until the actual scheduled time to ensure the teacher sees the student right away when class begins and can admit them before they begin teaching.
- Create a “working space” for your child that minimizes background noise and distractions.
- Keep/post your child’s schedule of Zoom classes.
- Reboot (shutdown) laptops daily and charge them nightly.
- Have any materials necessary to complete activities or assignments.
- Check all messages and communication.
- Remind your child to mute when it is necessary.

If you need technical assistance, please contact tech support at studenttech@palos118.org.

PTAB Committee

Our Palos 118 PTAB Committee, which stands for Teachers, Parents, Administrators and Board, was created to provide for stakeholder dialogue on issues impacting the school district. During these challenging times, communication has never been more important. Our PTAB Committee meets several times a year with an anticipated first meeting early October. We are inviting parents to apply to serve on this year's PTAB Committee. If you are interested in volunteering your time, please complete the following application by September 23. <https://ptabparentapplication.questionpro.com>. Parent representatives will be selected for each school; however, space is limited. We look forward to our first meeting of the year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Anthony M. Scarsella
Superintendent of Schools