



Palos School District 118

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

Dear Palos 118 Families,

Winter weather finally arrived this week with several inches of snow turning our school community into a winter wonderland. This pandemic adds additional layers of complexity to just about every aspect of operating the school district this year. Pre-pandemic, the decision to close school was made primarily for safety concerns about transportation and the physical condition of buildings. Now, staffing is as important as safety. Finding enough substitutes to cover for employees that cannot safely make it to work was difficult before the pandemic and exponentially more challenging at present. Doubling up classes in the event of a substitute shortage is no longer an option considering our safety plan. Fortunately, the option for remote learning provides an opportunity for keeping schools "open," even if that means our physical buildings are closed. Thank you to our families for continuing to partner with us when it becomes necessary to suspend in-person instruction.

Weekend COVID Test Results

If your child receives a positive COVID-19 test result over the weekend, please email your child's building administrators and school nurse immediately. Your child's positive test may result in the need to quarantine a classroom. If we are notified over the weekend, we can contact families and begin quarantines BEFORE students arrive at school on Monday. If you wait until Monday and a quarantine is required, parents must pick up their students after they arrive at school. This is an unnecessary disruption to their day. Let's continue to work together to limit these types of disruptions.

Please email the school principal and copy the assistant principal and school nurse.

PALOS SOUTH: swrzesinski@palos118.org; mdoornbos@palos118.org; jscott@palos118.org

PALOS WEST: jpeloquin@palos118.org; rwhite@palos118.org; tsegredo@palos118.org

PALOS EAST: rszklanecki@palos118.org; tdodds@palos118.org; dsierzega@palos118.org

Calendar Reminders

Please remember that February 5th is now a non-attendance day for students. There will be no in-person or synchronous learning that day. Teachers will assign asynchronous work on the morning of February 5th via SeeSaw and Schoology for students to complete during their half-day of learning. This was a previously scheduled half-day of attendance for students. Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled the afternoon of February 5th as needed.

On February 9th at 6:30 p.m., Palos 118 will be hosting a virtual parent information night with Dr. Christopher Higgins, licensed clinical psychologist, and founder of Palos Behavioral Health Professionals. Dr. Higgins' presentation will address what effects the events of 2020, such as the Covid-19 pandemic along with other national events, have on children. His presentation will focus on how children have been affected, what parents should look for when determining how their children are coping, and how to build their child's resiliency. He will provide parents with strategies to build their child's resiliency and to engage in meaningful conversation with their child. Dr. Higgins has presented in the past to our parents and has provided important information in understanding our children and practical, smart strategies to assist them with coping when faced with difficult situations.

To attend the meeting virtually, a link will be posted on the school district's website that day. We have limited capacity for attending in person. If you are interested in attending in-person, please email Darlene Caria at dcaria@palos118.org. We anticipate being able to accommodate only 15 in-person attendees. I hope you can join us virtually or in-person on February 9.

Second Semester Update

As mentioned in previous communications regarding upcoming 2nd-semester class assignments, it continues to be our goal to keep as much consistency for students as possible. With that said, after reviewing the requests we

received for students changing instructional learning models, we were able to maintain current teacher/class assignments for all students who did not request a change. Families who completed the Election Form in January have already been contacted by their school office with changes in teacher/class assignments. As a result, I am pleased to announce that there will be no need to post new class assignments in Skyward next week. Additionally, the Transportation Department will be contacting parents if your child is moving from remote only to in-person instruction and you requested bus service. Any questions regarding transportation can be directed to Ms. Mary Meyer at 448-4405.

This week's metrics:

- **A return to Phase 3 of the Governor's Restore Illinois Plan**
Suburban Cook County remains in Phase 4, which allows schools to conduct in-person instruction. Source: Governor's Office
- **Outbreaks of confirmed COVID-19 cases in schools**
We are unaware of any reported outbreaks in area schools. Source: ISC-4 and media reports.
- **Confirmed Community Spread**
Test Positivity is "substantial." New Cases per 100,000 is "substantial." New Cases are "minimal." Youth Case Increase is "minimal." The 7-day rolling positivity rate is $\leq 8\%$. The 14-day rolling positivity rate is $\geq 8\%$. Source: IDPH and Northwestern University
- **Directive from IDPH, CCDPH, ISBE, or the Governor's Office**
There have been no new directives this week.
- **District 118 Staffing**
If you are interested in becoming a substitute teacher, visit the [employment page](#) of our website to see if you qualify and to fill out an online application.
- **COVID Dashboard Statistics**
You can view our updated COVID Dashboard by visiting our website. www.palos118.org.

Trivia Night

Just a reminder, our Educational Foundation is holding its [annual Trivia fundraiser](#) on Saturday, February 6th from 7:00-8:30 p.m. This year the event is virtual via Zoom. You can get a group together and join the fun or make a donation. You can learn more about the Palos 118 Education Foundation at the following website: <https://www.palos118.org/parents/educational-foundation>

Sincerely,

Dr. Anthony M. Scarsella
Superintendent of Schools