



Dear Palos 118 Families,

Over the past several weeks, the school district has been reviewing the updated guidance for in-person learning from IDPH & ISBE and working to determine what, if any, changes should be made to our In-Person Learning Safety Plan. As a result of our review, the following changes will be made for the 4th quarter and take effect on Monday, April 19th.

1. Student and staff quarantines will be reduced from 14 days to 10 days per the updated Exclusion Chart from IDPH and CDC guidance.
2. Per IDPH, runny nose, nausea, and abdominal pain have been removed from the COVID-19 symptom list. Parents must continue to keep their students home if they have any of these symptoms until symptoms resolve. Students do not have to have a negative COVID-19 test or to quarantine for 10 days prior to returning to school once these symptoms resolve. If you are unsure about whether or not to send your child to school, please contact your school nurse.
3. Temperature checks at school will be suspended. Current IDPH and CDC guidance no longer recommend temperature checks onsite as an effective mitigation strategy. Parents must continue to take temperatures and fill out daily symptom surveys on our yellow forms.

Based on a recent study released by the CDC, the risk of surface transmission of COVID-19 appears to be low. As a result, the school district is revising its guidance on the use of shared manipulatives in the classroom, accessing library books in the Media Centers, utilizing exercise equipment at Palos South, and reopening our playgrounds for limited use.

Additionally, summer activities will be allowed this year following our safety procedures. This includes our popular Tech Camp and our athletic camps. We feel confident we can offer these programs because intermingling of student cohorts during the summer will not increase student quarantines and reduce instructional time as in-person instruction will have ended prior to the start of these programs. I am also pleased to announce we are planning for an outdoor graduation ceremony at Stagg High School for our eighth graders.

As we begin revising our safety procedures in light of new information, IDPH guidance, and trajectory of the pandemic in Illinois, I remain concerned that the progress we have made in the last several months can be quickly reversed as we are now seeing in Michigan. Please remember with the exception of the changes highlighted above, all of our other safety procedures remain in effect for the 4th quarter.

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. An increase in outbreaks is being reported in Michigan schools. Source: ISC-4 and media reports.
- **Confirmed Community Spread**
Test Positivity is "moderate." New Cases per 100,000 is "substantial." New Cases are "substantial." Youth Case Increase is "moderate." The 7-day rolling positivity rate is <=8%. The 14-day rolling positivity rate is <=8%. Source: IDPH and Northwestern University
- **Directive from IDPH, CCDPH, ISBE, or the Governor's Office**
No additional directives were issued 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 www.palos118.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anthony M. Scarsella
Superintendent of Schools