



SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

Timothy M. Van Tassel, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Laura Guerrette
Executive Secretary

December 20, 2021

Good afternoon SPS Families, Faculty, and Staff,

To begin this update, I would like to wish you all a wonderful end to this holiday season. Further, I am hopeful that you are able to spend the remaining days of 2021 among family and friends, as well as, relax and remain healthy throughout the upcoming vacation. Prior to the much anticipated break, I would like to provide you all with the most recent COVID-19 data and the information we are receiving from the Department of Public Health. With the increasing cases in our schools, it is important to provide this information prior to returning to school on January 3, 2022.

As we have shared over the past few weeks, the district has continued to experience increases in COVID-19 cases among students and staff since November. This phenomenon was not unanticipated; however, the increasing case trend is important to note. In addition, we are including last year's data for comparison purposes:

2021-22 School Year COVID-19 Positive Cases and Quarantines (as of Dec. 20, 2021)

Student and Staff Cases = 111 (since the beginning of the 2021-22 school year)

Daily Percentage of Students on Quarantine = 30.28%

2020-21 School Year COVID-19 Positive Cases and Quarantines (as of Dec. 20, 2020)

Student and Staff Cases = 50 (since the beginning of the 2020-21 school year)

Daily Percentage of Students on Quarantine = 70.63%

Weekly COVID-19 Positive Case Counts

	<i>Week of Nov. 1</i>	<i>Week of Nov. 8</i>	<i>Week of Nov. 15</i>	<i>Week of Nov. 22</i>	<i>Week of Nov. 29</i>	<i>Week of Dec. 6</i>	<i>Week of Dec. 13</i>	<i>Week of Dec. 20</i>
2021	6	6	8	4	16	11	13	7* (Dec. 20 only)
2020	3	3	7	4	9	3	10	0 (school not in session)

This data is being shared to provide transparency surrounding our positive cases, provide you with an historical comparison to last year, and to raise awareness of what we are experiencing. In addition, we are sharing this in hopes that everyone in our school community will remain vigilant and follow the health and safety guidance that is being provided to us by our health experts. As we continue to receive updates from the Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control in the weeks ahead, we will relay this information to our school community as it becomes available. Further, we will adjust our protocols as needed if this should become necessary. My hope is that this will not be needed; however, we are prepared to make changes if it is important to do so.

In terms of reporting COVID-19 cases during the vacation, the district will be adding a COVID-19 reporting link to our district website on Thursday, December 23, 2021. Parents are being asked to utilize this online reporting feature throughout the vacation week to report positive student cases or exposures. The online reporting system will ask only a few questions, and it will assist our administration and school nurses in prioritizing their responses to families when we return to school on Monday, January 3, 2022. Once again, the link will be able to be accessed on our district website under the [School Model Status](#) webpage starting this Thursday.

Since the start of this school year, our district has continued to prioritize the health and safety of our students, staff, and families amidst the ebb and flow of positive cases and quarantines. This school year has not been easy to say the least, but it has been made much easier through the collective efforts of everyone. I appreciate all that you are doing for our students, and I wish you a very safe, warm, and relaxing vacation.

See you in 2022!

Sincerely,
Timothy M. Van Tasel, Ed.D.