



SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

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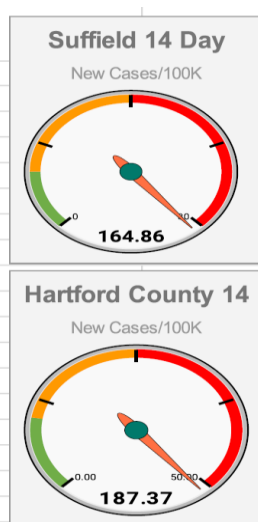
January 21, 2022

Dear Parents, Guardians, Faculty and Staff

It was my intent to share this information with you yesterday; however, after yesterday morning’s incorrect weather prediction, I was thinking that any correspondence other than an apology yesterday afternoon would not have been warmly received. Therefore, I held off until today to send you the most recent update on our COVID-19 metrics and our next steps as a district. Before going any further, I do apologize for yesterday’s weather cancellation. Our DPW did a fantastic job on the roads as always (I drove to work during the height of the snowfall – 0.25”) and we could have started school on-time and safely for our students and the majority of our staff. The precipitation amounts varied by town, but most of our neighboring communities experienced the same level as Suffield. With this being the case – I do apologize for yesterday’s cancellation and disruption to your work schedules. On a positive note, I am hearing that there are no immediate concerns of significant snowstorms and that February may bring some unseasonably warm weather.

To our district data.

COVID-19 Hartford County and Town of Suffield Metrics



Date	Number of new cases of COVID-19 (14-day average of new cases per 100,000 population per day)	
	Hartford County	Suffield
Jan 19	187.37	164.86
Jan 18	198.00	178.87
Jan 17	213.65	190.61
Jan 16	233.04	194.67
Jan 15	232.65	175.7
Jan 14	232.26	173.9
Jan 13	231.87	153.57
Jan 12	226.27	187.45
Jan 11	220.19	172.54
Jan 10	221.96	162.6
Jan 9	221.88	159.44
Jan 8	213.70	153.57
Jan 7	205.53	147.7
Jan 6	197.35	141.83
Jan 5	180.60	137.31
Jan 4	166.24	120.6
Jan 3	145.47	103.89

County metrics are going down

Suffield metrics are following county metrics

As noted last week, we were able to see that the county positive cases appeared to be plateauing. Since then, the metrics have declined in both the county and town. This is what we were hoping for, and it appears as though we hit our peak of cases during this wave. In some of the published data we have seen regarding this wave of positive cases, it appears as though case rates decrease as quickly as they increased.

COVID-19 Suffield Public Schools COVID-19 Trend History

	24-Dec	27-Dec	28-Dec	29-Dec	30-Dec	31-Dec	3-Jan	4-Jan	5-Jan	6-Jan	7-Jan	10-Jan	11-Jan	12-Jan	13-Jan	14-Jan	18-Jan	19-Jan	20-Jan
# of Confirmed Cases	7	24	11	17	11	10	68	10	8	3	9	66	9	9	7	4	28	3	1
# of Students Quarantined	101	84	85	86	91	89	111	149	180	183	152	161	107	81	91	93	39	35	32
# of Certified Staff Quarantined	1	2	3	4	7	8	10	16	16	14	14	3	4	3	3	3	6	0	0
# of Non-Cert. Staff Quarantined	1	2	2	4	5	5	2	5	5	6	6	8	6	5	8	8	1	2	0
Cert. & Non-Cert. Staff Totals	2	4	5	8	12	13	12	21	21	20	20	11	10	8	11	11	7	2	0
Student & Staff Totals	103	88	90	94	103	102	123	170	201	203	172	172	117	89	102	104	46	37	32

Similar to the county and town data, the district's confirmed cases and quarantines are trending down rather quickly. This is also good to see, as we want our families, faculty, and staff to feel reassured that the potential for school-based transmission has significantly decreased since the beginning of the month.

SPS Student Absence Reporting

		1/1	1/2	1/3	1/4	1/5	1/6	1/7	1/8	1/9	1/10	1/11	1/12	1/13	1/14	1/17	1/18	1/19	1/20	1/21
AWS	Student Isolation (Parent-Reported Positive Cases)	0	2	2	2	0	2	3	3	5	18	5	3	2	3	3	1	2	0	0
	Student Quarantine (Exposures/Symptoms/Family Member) - "Powerschool Remote"	-	-	5	11	25	27	-	-	-	25	34	54	44	7	-	24	13	-	7
	Students Absent - "Powerschool Absent Excused & Unexcused"	-	-	56	45	38	38	-	-	-	29	22	15	23	24	-	13	13	-	22
MIS	Student Isolation (Parent-Reported Positive Cases)	2	2	4	1	2	1	2	0	6	22	5	3	4	0	7	2	0	1	0
	Student Quarantine (Exposures/Symptoms/Family Member) - "Powerschool Remote"	-	-	7	4	16	37	-	-	-	16	23	30	32	40	-	6	16	-	15
	Students Absent - "Powerschool Absent Excused & Unexcused"	-	-	56	45	32	26	-	-	-	51	37	24	26	35	-	30	20	-	29
SMS	Student Isolation (Parent-Reported Positive Cases)	7	3	4	1	3	1	0	3	2	20	1	2	2	1	5	1	1	1	0
	Student Quarantine (Exposures/Symptoms/Family Member) - "Powerschool Remote"	-	-	1	1	17	24	NA	-	-	12	18	21	18	20	-	13	14	-	8
	Students Absent - "Powerschool Absent Excused & Unexcused"	-	-	54	54	40	32	-	-	-	29	31	28	26	44	-	27	18	-	32
SHS	Student Isolation (Parent-Reported Positive Cases)	1	9	13	5	3	1	4	6	9	9	1	4	0	0	4	3	1	2	0
	Student Quarantine (Exposures/Symptoms/Family Member) - "Powerschool Remote"	-	-	1	2	14	19	NA	-	-	13	13	7	10	7	-	3	5	-	9
	Students Absent - "Powerschool Absent Excused & Unexcused"	-	-	104	112	112	106	-	-	-	105	98	94	90	93	-	73	61	-	56

With high school midterm exams upon us next week and the 100th Day of School on February 8, 2022 (Thank you for sharing this very important elementary school celebration date with me Mrs. Blais - AWS Kindergarten Teacher) around the corner, this wave of positive cases is ending just in time for our students to be able to participate in-person for these important events.

SPS COVID-19 PCR Testing

Date	Registered	Tested	Positive	% Tested	% Positive
20-Dec	301	169	2	56.1%	1.2%
29-Dec	447	136	17	30.4%	12.5%
3-Jan	670	313	19	46.7%	6.1%
6-Jan	757	306	17	40.4%	5.6%
10-Jan	814	351	21	43.10%	6%
13-Jan	832	252	5	30.3%	2.0%
18-Jan	875	324	TBD	37%	TBD

Due to our decreasing cases and low positivity rate within our schools, we will be discontinuing the twice-a-week district testing the week of January 31st. Please note that we will continue to provide PCR testing every Monday (unless there is a need to shift it to another day of the week). Once again, we will continue to provide this testing opportunity for as long as it is available to us. As a reminder, we have a significant supply of at-home COVID-19 rapid tests that are available for symptomatic students and staff. Please contact your school nurse if you need access to one of these tests.

Next Steps

As a result of the significant reduction in isolations and quarantines, we are going to make minor adjustments to our COVID-19 online reporting procedures starting this weekend. We are asking that parents continue to utilize the Online Reporting Tool for COVID-19 reporting, but our schools will now be following up with phone call communications regarding reports of isolations and quarantines. We discontinued making direct contact throughout January due to the volume of positive cases and quarantines over the past month; however, with the decrease in cases, we believe we can return to the more personalized approach of contacting families as cases are reported. Once again, parents will still be reporting positive cases, symptoms, and exposures through the online reporting tool. All non-COVID-19 related absences from school should be reported through the school attendance voicemail.

Beginning the week of January 31st, we will further phase back to our protocols that were in place prior to the December break. Remote learning determinations and timelines, seating arrangements, small group work, student spectators at sporting events, volunteers in schools, and in-person meetings for parents and faculty are some of the ways we will return to our pre-January operations. Our schools will be providing updates regarding school-based protocols, such as communication plans for positive cases, in their next school-based correspondence.

With more students now healthy and back in school, we hope that we may have some more parents who are willing to substitute in the district. If you are interested in substituting, please contact Kathy Carney in Human Resources at 860-668-3802. We are very grateful for the willingness of our families to help us with the staffing shortage, as we were able to cover the majority of our classroom absences during the month of January. A special thank you to our many college students who returned home in January and gave up their winter breaks to substitute in our schools. On behalf of the entire faculty and staff, we wish them all a great spring semester and look forward to seeing them return “home” in May.

In closing, I appreciate the collective efforts of everyone in response to this month’s surge in cases. It appears as though the worst of the wave is behind us, and we can refocus on in-person learning for our students.

Sincerely,
Tim
Timothy M. Van Tassel, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools