

January 8, 2021

Dear Springfield Students, Families, Staff, and Community Members,

Happy 2021! I hope you and your family enjoyed a safe and restful holiday break and a smooth transition back into remote school.

As we prepare to welcome students back on Monday, January 11, 2021, we want to remind you about the hybrid model and protocols to keep our staff and students healthy and safe.

**First, families must complete the daily OnCourse Health Questionnaire** before arriving at school. As noted in [the letter](#) shared on Tuesday, January 5, 2021, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) [guidance](#) has shifted to require students and members of their household, who have experienced symptoms related to COVID-19, to remain at home. We remain thankful for the families and staff who promptly report positive test results and symptoms. Your honesty has helped us to make the best decisions for the health of our entire community. If you have any questions about test results or symptoms, please reach out to your [school nurse](#).

**Second**, the NJDOH guidance did not mandate schools to reduce the quarantine period related to out-of-state travel, defined as travel outside of New Jersey and the closest states (NY, PA, CT, and DE). As a result, district practice regarding quarantine for 14-days, following the return from such travel, has not changed. **If you traveled over the holiday period, please honor the 14-day requirement and refrain from sending your child to school until the 14 days have been completed.** Should you have any questions regarding this or other OnCourse Health Questionnaire items, please reach out to your [school nurse](#).

**Third, our region, Central East continues to be identified as “High” on the [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#).** As we have done throughout the school year, we will continue to closely monitor the daily reports from the State and the weekly reports from the NJDOH. We fully expect that over the next few months we will have to make decisions to pivot between hybrid and remote instruction. Factors that contribute to such decisions include positive cases in the school, staffing challenges relating to quarantines and substitute shortages, specific direction from the local health officials, and the status of the region on the COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix.

**Fourth, we expect that families may be shifting their decision regarding returning to school.** If your family chooses to remain virtual, instruction is expected to continue with minimal modifications. Families who have chosen the hybrid model, but want to return to virtual-only instruction, may do so at any time. Families who wish to shift the child(ren) to the hybrid model, will be allowed to do so, and specific dates for the transition will be determined by the building principal. Principals will determine the placement of students returning to hybrid instruction based on a variety of indicators, and families with specific needs should reach out to their school principal.

**Finally, we recognize this remains a time of incredible anxiety for all members of our community.** Our experience over the last year highlights the importance of recognizing the decisions we make individually have an impact on our community as a whole. As we face the

challenges ahead, we will work to operate in the spirit of respect and empathy for every member of our community. If your child or a member of your family needs support, please do not hesitate to reach out to our schools. Links to support social-emotional health can be found here: <https://www.springfieldschools.com/Content2/890>

Please continue to follow the guidance of our public health officials: wear your mask, wash your hands, maintain social distance, and whenever possible, avoid indoor gatherings where masks or social distancing is not likely.

I truly appreciate your patience and your support for our schools as we work together to fulfill our values to Search, Learn, and Serve.

Sincerely,

Rachel Goldberg

## **Helpful Links for Information:**

[NJ COVID-19 Website](#)

[Springfield Public Schools COVID-19 Information](#)

[COVID-19 Links](#)