



Dear Palos 118 Families,

Friday marks the end of the first semester of this very unusual school year. As we look back, we have much to celebrate. Since October, our families have been afforded the opportunity to choose between in-person instruction and remote-only instruction. Teachers have been assigned to either in-person or remote students so they can meet the unique demands of students enrolled in both instructional models. Every student has a district-owned device to support their learning. Our investment in additional social workers has increased the level of support we can offer families during this difficult time. Lunches are provided for pick-up to anyone in our community grappling with food insecurity. The comprehensive safety plan we implemented this school year has kept our staff and students safe by minimizing the potential for coronavirus from entering and transmitting in our schools. Most importantly, we put animosity and division aside and worked together to make all of these accomplishments possible for our children. Palos 118 continues to be the exception to the rule when it comes to educating children during a pandemic. Thank you for your partnership, and I look forward to working with you next semester.

As we look forward to a successful start to the second semester, please take a couple of moments to complete a very brief survey by [clicking on this link](#):

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 "moderate." 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 $\leq 8\%$. 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.

Additional Food Assistance for Eligible Families

The State of Illinois has been approved to provide additional food assistance to families with students who would have received free or reduced lunch while attending school but are not receiving these meals in school due to COVID-19 restrictions. For more information regarding this program, [please click here:](#)

Calendar Reminders

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.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anthony M. Scarsella
Superintendent of Schools