

Nov. 24, 2020



Good afternoon families,

As we approach Thanksgiving weekend and a much-needed break for us all, I want to share some important information as we collectively strive to keep our schools open during the COVID-19 pandemic. The information was presented to the Board of Education at the School Board meeting last night. You can view the presentation [HERE](#).

Days Off / Virtual Days

First and foremost, please remember that there is no school for students Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of this week. In addition to those originally scheduled days off, all students will be learning virtual from home Monday, Nov. 30, and Tuesday, Dec. 1. The days are now professional learning days and will give the district a buffer between Thanksgiving and a return to school so that parents and guardians can assess their child(ren)'s health several days after any family gatherings or celebrations.

The extra days out of schools are another way the district is attempting to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Our numbers - just like the state's, county's and city's numbers - continue to rise. Students and staff have been instructed to stay home because they have tested positive or have been considered a close contact to someone who has. We continue to share our daily numbers on our [COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

Mitigating the Spread

As I said in my phone call last week to families, it is imperative that you continue to keep your child home when they are sick, presenting symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the illness. The best way to keep our students and staff safe and in our buildings is to keep COVID-19 out.

Starting next week, in order to help further mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the district is implementing changes to our handling of students exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. Out of an abundance of caution and based off of Waukesha County information related to household spread, the SDNB will consider ALL siblings of students who are COVID-19 symptomatic as possible close contacts. As such, the student and their sibling(s) will be required to isolate at home until at least one of the following is satisfied: they isolate for 10 days; they produce a negative test result for the symptomatic student, and share the result electronically with the SDNB; and / or they can provide a doctor's note explaining any symptoms as something other than COVID-19. Similarly, all children of COVID-19 positive parents / guardians in the same household will be subject to the new guidelines detailed above.

Also, as we head into this holiday weekend, please note [this letter from Waukesha County](#) related to Thanksgiving gatherings and other similar events that are among the biggest drivers of new COVID-19 cases.



Staffing Levels and Substitutes

Staffing our classrooms has become an immense daily challenge. There simply aren't enough substitutes to fill our daily vacancies, and while I applaud our staff for taking a "all hands on deck" approach to this task, we are nearing a tipping point. We need more subs! As we've shared in *The Edge*, our community e-newsletter, our partner, EDUStaff, is accepting applications for substitute teachers. In order to meet the qualifications, you must have a teacher's license OR you can obtain a substitute permit from the State Department of Public Instruction with completion of an Associate's or Bachelor's degree and a school district sponsor (and complete and submit a negative tuberculosis test and complete a background check). For a limited time, the SDNB will refund the substitute permit fee of \$125 (conditions apply). For more information on the benefits of becoming a substitute, please check out this [LINK](#).

Finally, we ask that all parents and guardians make sure their contact information in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal is up to date and accurate to ensure that you receive all pertinent emails, phone calls and texts from the district related to COVID-19 and other important messages.

We hope that our students, staff and families have a happy and healthy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Joe Garza, Superintendent