



January 14, 2022

Greetings students, families, and staff of District 161,

I hope you made it through the frigid temperatures over the last week without too much excitement. Our COVID-19 cases continue to decrease from the spike that we experienced over the last several weeks, but we are still in the thick of the omicron variant. This week's letter shares important information about the updated quarantine guidelines and overall, the changes will keep more students learning in-person, safely. There are also several links with important information in this letter, so please open them to review the necessary information.

### **COVID-19 Metrics**

As of today, we have 144 active COVID-19 cases between students and staff members in our 5 schools and district office. In addition, we have 0 outbreaks at this time. You can find our district and school metrics anytime by following [this link](#). Please make sure to keep your child home from school if they are ill and also notify your building nurse if your child does test positive for COVID-19. The breakdown of the active student and staff cases is as follows:

- Flossmoor Hills: 14 active cases
- Heather Hill: 13 active cases
- Serena Hills: 40 active cases
- Western Avenue: 30 active cases
- Parker Junior High: 43 active cases
- Normandy Villa: 4 active cases
- Total: 144 active cases

### **\*NEW\* Updated Quarantine Guidelines**

The Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health have adopted the updated quarantine guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and that information can be found [at this link](#). In summary, the quarantine period has decreased to 5 days for unvaccinated individuals who are considered a close contact. **Students and adults who are vaccinated will not have to quarantine if they are only a close contact.** [Please follow this link for District 161 specific information on quarantines.](#)

**The student vaccination percentages by school are below:**

Flossmoor Hills School: 8.6%

Heather Hill School: 14.2%

Serena Hills School: 11.2%

Western Avenue School: 29.5%

Parker Junior High School: 32.2%

**Vaccination Clinic Information**

We are working with the Cook County Department of Public Health to offer additional vaccination clinics at Normandy Villa [District Office] on January 21st and February 15th. Please see [this flyer](#) for additional details. In addition to adding vaccination clinics, we are finalizing the schedule for consistent community-wide SHIELD testing events at Parker Junior High School.

**\*NEW\* Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service**

On Monday, January 17th, District 161 students, parents, and staff members will participate in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. This event has grown dramatically over the last few years and we will continue to value community service and giving back to those in need in our area. The community projects, including District 161 schools, can be found [at this link](#). I hope to see many of you out and about on Monday, sharing in the fun and joy of service to our neighbors.

**Employment Opportunities**

Interested in becoming a part of the D161 team? We are currently seeking individuals to fill the following positions: Art Teacher at Parker Junior High, Lunchroom Supervisor at Serena Hills, School Support Aide at Parker, Special Education and Instructional Paraprofessionals at Western Avenue, Homebound Instruction Teacher, Guest Teachers, Guest School Nurses, 2nd Shift Part-Time Custodian, and Bus Driver. For our online application, click [this link](#) and then the 'Apply' button next to the position. To find out more about what D161 has to offer, click [here](#).

**\*NEW\* Interested in being a Short-Term Substitute Teacher?**

Do you have an Associates Degree or 60 undergraduate hours? Looking for a part-time job that pays at least \$115 a day? Then, becoming a Substitute Teacher in D161 might be perfect for you! Check out [this flier](#) for Sub Teacher Training. If you have any questions about the process to becoming a licensed substitute teacher, please contact our Human Resources department.

Thank you to everyone who has reached out to me over the last few weeks to discuss COVID-19 and all that it entails. The feedback, ideas, and questions help us improve our practices, so please keep sending them to me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dana Smith, Superintendent