



April 14, 2022

Greetings Everyone!

There are no changes to report for our current COVID-19 protocols at this time, but we are monitoring increases in cases in other parts of the country. The COVID-19 numbers in District 161 remain low and we will be proactive if we need to change any of our practices. This week's letter contains important information regarding the end of the school year and a few other updates.

COVID-19 Metrics

As of today, we have 9 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. In certain circumstances, home tests for COVID-19 may be allowed for proof of absence of disease.

Community SHIELD Testing Information

Community-wide SHIELD testing is available every Saturday at Parker Junior High School from 9am to noon. Additional details can be found [here](#).

***NEW* 2022-23 Calendar Change**

Tuesday, November 8th, is now an Election Holiday [No School] to recognize the date of the general election in Illinois. Veterans Day is also celebrated on Friday of that week, November 11th. Therefore, we will observe the Veterans Day Holiday on Monday, November 7th, to provide scheduling consistency for our families. The school schedule for the week of November 7th will be as follows:

- Monday, November 7, 2022: No School, Veterans Day
- Tuesday, November 8, 2022: No School, Illinois General Election Day
- Wednesday, November 9, 2022: Students In-School
- Thursday, November 10, 2022: Students In-School
- Friday, November 11, 2022: Students In-School / Veterans Day Activities

***NEW* Community Partnership Grant**

Last November, we applied for a grant to support our efforts to provide more services to the District 161 community and I am very proud to report that we have received \$635,000 for these projects! The work will cover three specific areas: 1) addressing out-of-school barriers through partnerships with community health and services agencies, 2) establishing collaborative leadership practices in the community, and 3) building active parent, guardian, and community engagement. We are in the early stages of planning and will have a full presentation for the Board of Education at our meeting on May 31, 2022.

***NEW* District 161 Curriculum Updates**

On Tuesday, April 5th, we hosted a parent event to review samples of curriculum materials for our new Social Studies curriculum. The Social Studies Curriculum Committee is now reviewing the feedback and preparing their recommendation for the Board of Education, so that we are prepared to launch the new materials at the start of the 2022-23 school year. We are also in the process of reviewing and revising the learning experiences for classes such as Art, Music, Physical Education, and STEAM. Over the last five years, we have completely revamped all of the core District 161 curriculum materials and we will continue to focus on improving our instructional strategies and student experiences. The recommended Social Studies materials are on display at the Normandy Villa District Office if you would like to see them.

***NEW* End of the School Year Party**

Please save the date for the annual District 161 End of the School Year Party on Wednesday, May 25th at 5:30 p.m. at Parker Junior High School. Like in years passed, we will have a DJ, games for kids of all ages, food trucks, and other activities. All District 161 community members are welcome and I am looking forward to celebrating the end of the school year with all of you.

Kindergarten Roundup

A kindergarten roundup event has been scheduled on Wednesday, April 20th from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. at each elementary school. Parents will be able to submit registration and residency paperwork, tour the school, and meet the current kindergarten team. You will receive additional information from your school principal on this opportunity.

Summer Academy Information

The SD161 Summer Academy program will begin on June 6, 2022 and end on July 19, 2022. Registration is now open for Summer Academy. Please review the [Summer Academy Newsletter](#) and complete the registration form below. The program will provide free learning opportunities for pre-K-7th-grade students. Registration is due by Friday, May 6, 2022. Please contact summeracademy@sd161.org if you have any questions.

- Registration Forms: [English](#) / [Spanish](#)

Employment Opportunities

Interested in becoming a part of the D161 team? We are currently seeking individuals to fill positions for Summer Academy and for the 2022-23 school year. To view our open positions and/or apply for a position, please click [here](#). To find out more about what D161 has to offer, click

[here](#). If you have any questions about the process to becoming a licensed substitute teacher, please contact our Human Resources department.

Are you interested in becoming a certified teacher and already have a bachelor's degree? National Louis University, one of our university partners, has informational sessions coming up about obtaining your Masters of Arts in Teaching degree in Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Grades, or Special Education. [This flier](#) will provide you with more information about their upcoming sessions.

Important Upcoming Events:

- Wednesday, April 20 at 6:00 p.m.: Kindergarten Round-Up
- Monday, April 25 at 6:00 p.m.: Board of Education Meeting
- Friday, April 29: Outdoor Education–Flossmoor Hills

Over the last six weeks of school, you will notice that we will continue to implement our social / emotional learning lessons and to celebrate the positive behavior choices of our students. We continue to reinforce the behavior expectations at each of our schools, so that our children can have meaningful learning experiences throughout the last day of school. Please encourage your child to continue to demonstrate positive behaviors, so that we can have a positive end to the school year. If you have any questions about the information in this letter, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dana Smith, Superintendent