



LITTLE SILVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Little Silver Families,

Looking back on the first month of the school year, I am so proud of the transition our staff and students made back into the classroom. The level of excitement and engagement coupled with the beautiful weather, made for an outstanding month of September in both schools! As we continue to move forward into the fall season, the time has come to provide the community with an update on a couple of important topics.

Unfortunately, our district has been faced with multiple confirmed cases of Covid-19 in recent weeks. As you may know, our school nurses are responsible for conducting the initial part of the contact tracing process in order to identify close contacts to the individual that tested positive. Students identified are then expected to quarantine at home. As a reminder, students excluded from school for this Covid-related reason are eligible for live streaming until they return to school. However, the timing of the notification and the request for streaming plays a significant role in the teacher's ability to make all of the arrangements and coordinate the materials and resources needed for students who are at home. This is especially true for teachers at PRS whose students work with different types of resources than the students at MPS. In short, it is important for families to remain patient and allow the teachers to coordinate their efforts and resources for remote students with the understanding that they also must continue to provide instruction to the students physically present in their class. While all teachers will make every effort to include and connect with students eligible for remote instruction in a timely manner, the reality is that the timing of the notification may result in a delay of possibly 24 hours to fully make this happen.

Since the start of September, the district's Covid Team has been monitoring the local data and the impact of Covid cases in our schools over the past month. In particular, the Team has been discussing the current protocol for quarantining students who are identified as close contacts to an individual who tested positive for Covid-19. Knowing that our goal for the year is to keep our students in school to the greatest extent possible, the Team made the decision to reconsider our current protocol of excluding students from school for 14 days when they are identified as a close contact.

Before making a final decision on this matter, the Team reviewed the data from the past year to determine how often students placed in quarantine became symptomatic and eventually tested positive for Covid-19. Based on our findings, it was clear that only a very small percentage of students (roughly 1%) fell into this category. To take that a step further, the percentage of students who tested positive between days 10-14 was zero. As a result of our findings, the Team has agreed to modify our protocol and implement the following changes that are in line with the CDC guidelines:

- Unvaccinated students identified as close contacts and excluded from school will be able to return to school after 7 days, provided that they produce a negative PCR test result. The test should be taken on or after day 5 of the quarantine period. As long as the PCR test result is negative and the student remains asymptomatic, then that individual may return to school on day 8. If the student is unable to be tested or if the family opts not to have the student tested, then the individual may return to school on day 11 provided that he/she remains asymptomatic. Parents should closely



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monitor children for symptoms for the full 14 days. ***Please remember to keep children home if they exhibit symptoms, especially a fever.***

- If a member of your family is a confirmed case of Covid-19, then that individual should be isolated from the rest of the family. This is important, especially in situations where siblings are concerned. Provided that the individual who tested positive is able to isolate, then the children and/or siblings are eligible to return to school using the same 7/10 protocol listed above. If a student who tested positive is unable to be isolated from siblings, then the only person who is able to return to school on day 11 is the child who tested positive, provided that the individual is symptom free. In this situation, the siblings would start their 7/10 day clock after the initial 10 days have ended.

If you have any questions about the above information, please contact either of the school nurses directly.

On a different subject, for those of you that may not know, in addition to the agenda and minutes from each Board of Education meeting being posted on our website, I have also started to post my Superintendent's report in the same location as well. Hopefully this additional information will provide the community with more insight about what was discussed during the BOE meeting. As always, I am happy to answer questions about my report, so feel free to reach out directly by phone or email (mettore@littleschools.org).

I continue to be impressed with the level of cooperation and support in our community, so please continue to work closely with the staff in both schools to help us keep our students safe and in school to the greatest extent possible.

Respectfully,

Michael E. Ettore
Superintendent of Schools