

# The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools

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December 29, 2021

Dear Scotch Plains - Fanwood Community,

I hope everyone is enjoying their winter break. Unfortunately, the number of COVID-19 cases is at the highest point it has been this school year. Leading up to the winter break, this steep increase resulted in a considerable number of quarantines and high absenteeism among both students and staff. We continue to maintain in person instruction for our students that looks as normal as possible, while implementing safety protocols to keep COVID-19 at bay. Throughout the break, we have remained in close contact with the Department of Health who has guided the recommendations below.

## **Adjustment in Schedule: January 3-5, 2022**

In an effort to reduce the spread of the virus and to minimize opportunities for close contact, the District will implement [single session days](#) for students January 3-5, 2022. This will allow time to assess the status of COVID-19 by allowing the school nurses to perform contact tracing. The [single session days](#) will support a safe reopening by reducing the amount of time students are around each other, especially during lunchtime when they are not masked. Any further changes to the district schedule would be made in conjunction with the Department of Health and only after careful consideration.

Through January 2, 2022 students and staff should continue to report positive COVID-19 cases and exposures via the links below:

[Student COVID-19 Reporting Form](#)

[Staff COVID-19 Reporting Form](#)

## **COVID-19 Testing**

Since we are returning from a longer break and anticipate that gatherings will have taken place over the holiday season, we strongly encourage all students and staff, vaccinated and unvaccinated, to get tested for COVID-19 before returning to school.

**On Sunday, January 2, 2022, the district will offer free COVID-19 saliva testing for students and staff. Representatives from [Mirimus](#) will be collecting saliva tests at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School and Coles Elementary School from 12:00pm-**

**4:00pm. It does not matter which testing site you go to; and, there will be no scheduled appointment times. Please take advantage of these testing opportunities.**

In order to be tested at either of these sites students and staff should complete the Mirimus Online Consent form at [spfk12.org](http://spfk12.org) using the entire proper name of your school as listed below:

- Evergreen Elementary School (Scotch Plains-Fanwood-Union County)
- Howard B. Brunner Elementary School
- J. Ackerman Coles Elementary School
- School One Elementary School
- William J. McGinn Elementary School
- Terrill Middle School
- Malcolm E. Nettingham Middle School (**this is listed as Park Middle School**)
- Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School

### **Remote Instruction**

The Governor's Executive Order does not allow for a remote instruction option. District-wide remote instruction can only be utilized if the Department of Health declares a public health emergency that requires a school or the district to shut down for three consecutive days or more.

The district continues to provide remote learning for students who are required to isolate or quarantine. We will continue to do so and will provide information and directions on Sunday so that all students who are unable to attend school in-person on Monday can access remote learning that day, regardless of confirmed COVID status.

### **Avoid Sending Students to School with Symptoms**

Please be considerate of other students and families, and keep your child home if they are sick or awaiting a test result because they are symptomatic.

As we live through this global pandemic, we will continue to do everything we can to provide a positive in-person educational experience and prioritize the academic, physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of all our students. On behalf of the district and the BOE, I offer my sincere appreciation for your patience and continued partnership, and wish all of you and your families a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Joan Mast

Superintendent