

Shaler Area School District

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February 5, 2021

Dear Shaler Area families,

First, thank you to all of our families who have completed the survey we shared last week. As a reminder, the deadline to submit responses is midnight tonight, February 5. The information we collect through the survey is important and will help guide us when considering modifications to our instructional planning. Specifically, we are looking at the possibility of increasing the number of in-person instruction days and what that would look like at each grade level.

We recognize that our community is divided on whether or not we should return to more in-person instruction. Please know that in addition to surveying our families and staff, we are working closely with the Allegheny County Health Department, state Department of Education and Department of Health as well as consulting with other school districts, accessing data on school transmission rates, and reviewing research on the mental health impacts of the pandemic to inform our decision-making process.

If you have not already done so, please complete one survey for each child enrolled in the district by midnight tonight: <https://forms.gle/KY5qWEPHE2L2tedF7>.

In a continued effort to better communicate how the pandemic is affecting the district, below is a summary of the additional positive COVID-19 cases added since our communication last Friday:

- One student at Burchfield tested positive on Jan. 29.
- One employee associated with Shaler Area Middle School tested positive on Jan. 29.
- One employee associated with Shaler Area Middle School tested positive on Feb. 1.
- One student at Shaler Area Elementary School tested positive on Feb. 3.
- One student at Shaler Area Middle School tested positive on Feb. 3.
- One employee at Shaler Area High School tested positive on Feb. 3.
- One student at Burchfield Primary tested positive on Feb. 4.
- One student at Shaler Area Middle School tested positive on Feb. 4.
- One employee at Shaler Area High School tested positive on Feb. 4.
- One student at Shaler Area High School tested positive on Feb. 4.
- One student at Shaler Area Middle School tested positive on Feb. 5.

As we communicated yesterday, Shaler Area Middle School temporarily transitioned to the Virtual Instruction Model for all Cohorts and will resume in-person instruction and activities on Monday, Feb. 8. This decision is in accordance with the state Department of Health's recommendations to close individual school buildings that experience a certain number of positive COVID-19 cases based on the size of the school within a rolling 14-day period.

The district, in partnership with the Allegheny County Health Department, has identified and notified any individuals who have been identified as a close contact. When a positive COVID-19 case occurs in the district, we will continue to send an email to all families and staff members of the affected building and update our district's COVID-19 dashboard: <https://www.sasd.k12.pa.us/COVID-19Dashboard.aspx>.

As always, thank you for being our partners in education as we navigate this unusual school year together.

Sincerely,

Sean C. Aiken, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Bryan E. O'Black, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent