

Dear Coles Families,

I cannot tell you how happy we are to have your children back in school every day learning and growing alongside their teachers and peers. I know you share that feeling, but I also know that a lot of anxiety remains around the COVID-19 pandemic and what is being done in school to keep everyone safe.

I want to assure you that our school is the best, safest place for your children to be. Our safety protocols, which include wearing masks, staying distanced wherever possible, and regularly washing our hands, are doing their job. We know this to be true, because cases of the virus in CPS schools remain very low, and the data is showing us that schools are not a significant source of spread for COVID-19. Almost all cases of COVID among students and staff have been isolated incidents. As of October 8, there have been only 17 instances across all of CPS reported to CDPH where more than one individual in a school setting — a classroom or a program — were infected with COVID at the same time, and never more than four individuals at the same time.

I am proud to say that COVID-19 testing is now up and running in our school, and I encourage all parents who have not yet done so to sign their children up [here](#). The results we are seeing from this testing are encouraging. Fewer than 0.2 percent of those tested district-wide - less than two out of every 1,000 CPS students and staff - have tested positive for COVID-19, confirming that schools are not a significant source of spread for COVID. I am very much in favor of this weekly testing, as it is helping us keep the number of COVID-19 cases in our school low and is assisting us in preventing COVID-19 outbreaks in our classrooms.

The district has made great strides in contact tracing too, with nearly 93 percent of reported cases now being fully investigated within 48 hours. As parents, I know how important it is to know quickly if your child has been exposed to COVID-19, so CPS will continue adjusting this process until that 48-hour timeframe reaches 100 percent.

If your child has been quarantined, your first concern is obviously their health. But from the conversations I've had with many families, I know you are also concerned about the impact being away from school will have on their education. I share that concern, and am always eager to get students back in the classroom as quickly as possible. So I was glad to learn that effective Saturday, October 9, CPS is shortening the quarantine timeline for students and staff impacted by COVID-19 from 14 to 10 days.

This decision was made in accordance with advice from trusted public health experts, including the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Illinois Department of Public Health

(IDPH), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and puts CPS in line with other large school districts around the country. We will always base our decisions on the science, and this change is no exception. The science is telling us that when there is a COVID-19 case, 98 percent of those identified as close contacts do not go on to develop COVID-19.

My goal in sharing this data is to create a feeling of trust about how SCHOOL NAME is managing the pandemic. You can visit CPS' [new COVID site](#) for data about our school and the district at large.

These are challenging times, but by working together, we can maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff. We will continue to be transparent in order to ensure trust in our school community.

I thank you for your support and partnership and urge you to reach out to me at any time if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Mr. Charles Mc Spadden, Principal