

**Board Meeting Date: December 9, 2021**

## **COVID-19 Board Report**

**PURPOSE:** Provide an Update about District 191's efforts to implement COVID-19 related educational and public health guidance issued by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), respectively.

### **Overview:**

First, I want to say how I'm proud of our students, families and staff as we made a switch to distance learning. Staff have worked together to deliver instruction, meals, support and so much more, and do it safely. Students and staff made adjustments too. Students know the value of in-person instruction and missed being with their friends and teachers. Parents had to make childcare arrangements. I've heard from some staff members and some parents with questions about what led to this decision. In particular, people are asking for more specifics. I have shared specifics in messages to families and staff, but I wanted to share some of that information publicly.

We were seeing rising cases in our schools and in terms of the number of students who were moved out of school due to the effects of COVID. Specifically, the week of Oct. 31, we had 20 cases reported of students who tested positive and were in our schools during their infectious period. The next week, that number climbed to 28, and then to 42 cases in our schools the week of Nov. 14.

We were also seeing likely spread among our students in school. In fact, three schools had classrooms where three or more students tested positive for COVID.

In terms of students impacted, 175 students were quarantined or otherwise kept out of school because of COVID during the week of Oct. 31. The next week, that number rose to 416 and then 492 during the week of Nov. 14. That's about 6% of all our students.

When it came to staffing, during the week of Nov. 15, we were able to fill only 65% of substitute teacher positions. That leaves a lot of classrooms needing to be covered by other teachers, counselors, administrators, media specialists and other licensed educators. The strain on our system was immense.

Add to that, on Nov. 19, I participated in a conversation with the Minnesota Dept of Health where they shared that infections among school-age children were surging and expected to get worse over the next two weeks.

I hope that makes clear the reasons for making the transition, both in terms of health and safety of our students and in terms of our ability to deliver education every day.

Monday, Dec. 6 we came back to in person learning for students not enrolled in our Virtual Academy. During my school visits this week it was wonderful to see students back in-person.

We've taken a cautious, conservative approach to this pandemic with the health of our students, staff and community as our priority. I know not everyone agrees with our approach, but I do believe it was the right decision to move to distance Learning.

We're making it through this and I'm so appreciative that we're doing it together.

And now Bernie Bien, lead licensed school nurse will share health data from MN, Dakota and Scott Counties and information regarding our student vaccinations and our participation in MN's testing program.

**Updates:** Local Data (MN, Dakota/Scott County and 191)

**Data:**

Our state and community continues to be in a High level of community transmission for COVID-19. The Delta variant continues to be prevalent in covid cases. However a new variant, Omicron has been identified and is being followed closely to determine the severity along with the rate of transmission. We have to remember that COVID is a virus and mutation of the virus resulting in a variant is expected.

**MN:**

MDH has posted the Statewide positivity for 11/21-11/27 is 10%. For this time frame the positivity for Dakota was 10.5% and Scott 11.1%

The Breakthrough infection rate has increased from 2.2% on 11/18, our last board meeting to 3.1% this week

**7 day Case Rate for positive cases per 100K**

**Dakota**

- Current 584.59      Last board meeting it was 509.77
- Current Positivity is 10.6%
- 22% of the new cases this week were in students under 12.
- Last week 14 deaths occurred in DC.

**Scott**

- Current 560 Last board meeting it was 685.18
- 17% of new cases this week were in students under 12

### **191 positive cases and investigations**

As of 12/5 cumulatively for the school year - We have been informed of 65 positive cases among staff with 53 cases resulting in a case investigation due to being infectious while in building. (Last board meeting, there were cumulatively 44 total cases.)

For students cumulatively for the school year we have been informed of 296 positive cases with 209 requiring a case investigation. (Last board meeting, there were cumulatively 176 total cases.)

### **191 case investigations**

This week thus far for students and staff we have been informed of 56 cases which resulted in 12 investigations.

Again I would like to thank the community for helping us create a symptom free zone and students and staff staying home when ill.

### **Saliva Screening and Testing (Optional saliva screening)**

Next week staff will have an option to participate in a saliva screening during school which will utilize our remaining Vault saliva kits.

Beginning in January, screening will be offered through a partnership with the Midwest Coordination Center Testing which includes specimen collection through a self nasal swab. Staff will be getting a survey tomorrow to sign up for this program.

### **Student Testing**

We continue to partner with Dakota Child and Family Clinic in Burnsville to provide PCR testing to students who are ill and siblings. This week this has been expanded to include the adults in the car. .

### **Vaccinations**

We continue to provide information on vaccination opportunities for our families. December 19th, Sunday a clinic will be held at BHS for all ages which includes some slots for boosters. The registration link went live on Monday and as of 9:00 this morning 119 slots were filled. The registration link is available in multiple languages and is specific for our district.

We will also be finishing up our Dose 2 clinics for 442 students.