



South Park School District  
Central Administration Offices  
2005 Eagle Ridge Drive  
South Park, PA 15129  
412-655-3111 • Fax: 412-655-2952  
www.sparksd.org

## South Park School District

**November 17, 2020**

South Park Families:

We continue to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases in our country, state, county and community. We also continue to rely on the expertise of the Allegheny County Health Department. The doctors, nurses and staff of the health department have provided continual guidance to our staff and administrators during school days, evenings and weekends. The district extends its appreciation to the dedicated Allegheny County Health Department staff.

Over the past week, we have seen the ever-changing dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic. The increase in cases is affecting schools throughout the region, including South Park High School which will now operate under a remote instructional model through Wednesday, November 25 following a number of reported cases since last Thursday. At this time, South Park Middle School and South Park Elementary Center will remain under a hybrid instructional model. The increased physical distancing which can be achieved only through the hybrid model has prevented the district and health department from needing to quarantine even more students and staff. Still, as of Monday, November 16, approximately 10 South Park students and staff are in isolation after testing positive for COVID-19 and approximately 65 students and staff members are in quarantine after being exposed to a confirmed positive case during extra-curricular activities or in their families or communities.

Since Monday, November 9, there has been a 20% increase in COVID-19 cases in South Park Township, according to the Allegheny County Health Department. The health department reports a positivity rate in South Park Township since November 9 of 22.83%. On Friday, November 13, the Pennsylvania Department of Health moved Allegheny County to the substantial level of community transmission, meaning an incidence rate of 100 or more per 100,000 residents or a PCR percent positivity rate of 10% or more. The incidence rate for the most recent seven-day period in Allegheny County was 138.7 per 100,000 residents. The county's PCR percent positivity rate is 7.6%. When a county's community transmission is classified as "substantial" for two weeks, the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Health recommend considering remote instruction. This is, however, just a recommendation. This was once again shared by state officials in a meeting between county superintendents and the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Health on Monday, November 16. The final decision is made by individual school districts. We will be paying close attention to the daily reports from the Allegheny County Health Department and this Friday's state update.

It remains imperative to continue following public health guidelines, namely wearing a mask or face covering when leaving your home, practicing physical distancing from those who do not live with you, frequently washing hands, disinfecting touch surfaces and staying home when you are sick. We remind families and staff to daily use the district's [at-home symptom screening tool](#) before leaving for school. Additionally, as COVID-19 cases rise in our community, we ask that students, especially high school students, refrain from group activities with other students where physical distancing and mask-wearing are not often practiced.

**Wayne P. Gdovic, Superintendent** ■ **Chelsea M. Campolongo, Business Manager**



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The final two months of the year bring many traditions we all look forward to. From spending time with family members near and far and going store-to-store looking for the best deals, these moments are part of what makes this time of the year special. We must acknowledge, however, that some of these traditions may look a little different this year. As we enter the final months of the year, we encourage you to practice the previously mentioned health guidelines. Consider alternative celebrations which may be less likely to spread COVID-19. [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has prepared this list](#) of Thanksgiving activities it considers to be low-risk, moderate-risk and high-risk. Additionally, the Pennsylvania Department of Health recommends those who travel to certain states ([listed here](#)) quarantine for 14 days upon return to Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Department of Health has provided [the answers to frequently asked questions](#) as a resource for travelers.

Over the summer, we promised to remain flexible and to pivot to different instructional models if conditions warrant. We also may need to transition to a different instructional model at a school or throughout the district if we are unable to staff classrooms or positions due to quarantine. Such a transition may need to occur quickly with very little notice, so we ask for your understanding.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring a healthy school environment for our students and staff. We will continue to provide updates via email, phone and on our website when necessary. If you have questions or if your child or an immediate family member tests positive for COVID-19, please contact your child's school nurse.

### **SCHOOL NURSES**

#### **South Park Elementary Center**

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#### **South Park Middle School**

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#### **South Park High School**

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Sincerely,

Wayne P. Gdovic  
Superintendent of Schools  
South Park School District