



# SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education -14 Beekman Terrace- Summit - New Jersey 07901-1702 (908) 273-3023

Mr. Scott Hough, Superintendent of Schools

December 22, 2021

Dear Summit Public Schools Community,

As we continue to monitor data in our community and in New Jersey, it is difficult to ignore the significant increase in COVID-19 cases we have seen over the past few weeks. We have more cases in the District now than we have seen in a one month period since the pandemic began. While this is not cause for panic, it serves as an important reminder for all of us to do our part to keep our children and staff safe and our schools open. In response to this increase and in anticipation of this continuing through the winter break, we must be prepared to take additional steps to keep our schools open and safe.

## COVID-19 Testing

In an effort to reduce the spread of the virus and the amount of close contacts, the District will cancel school on Monday, January 3, 2022, and offer COVID-19 testing for students and staff. Because we are returning from a longer break and anticipate gatherings over the holiday season, **we strongly encourage all students and staff, vaccinated and unvaccinated, to get tested for COVID-19 before returning to school.** The more students and staff get tested, the less of an impact we will see in our schools. If we are able to identify positive cases early on, fewer close contacts will be identified during contact tracing, thus reducing the need to quarantine a higher number of students and staff. Representatives from [Mirimus](#) will be collecting saliva tests at Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School and Summit High School on Monday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information about the testing protocols, registration, and what to expect, [please click here](#). It does not matter which site you go to, and there will be no appointment times. **We strongly encourage all students and staff, vaccinated and unvaccinated, to take advantage of the testing opportunities at Summit High School and Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School on January 3, 2022.**

## Adjustment in Schedule Week of January 4-7

All schools will then follow a single session schedule for the remainder of that week, January 4-7. The single session schedule provides us time to collect results from Mirimus and begin contact tracing while eliminating lunch, where we see more students identified as close contacts because they are unmasked and in a less structured setting. We believe this is a balanced approach in providing meaningful instruction and reducing the impact of quarantines in our schools.

## Remote Instruction

As previously communicated, the Governor's Executive Order does not allow an option for remote instruction. 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



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consecutive days or more ([The Road Forward](#)). The District continues to consult with the Department of Health on matters related to COVID-19, and **we have not received a directive or recommendation to pivot to remote instruction**. Our goal is to continue to have in-person instruction, co-curriculars, and keep the schedules we have established this school year.

Please be aware in the event a classroom or larger group of students has to quarantine, or the state directs all schools to pivot to remote instruction, we do have a [remote instructional plan](#) ready for our teachers and staff to implement. As a precautionary measure heading into winter break, **every student should take their Chromebook home**. While we do not anticipate a directive from the state, we want to ensure the continuity of instruction in the event we are directed to deliver remote instruction.

### Sending Students to School with Symptoms

Please do not send children to school if they are sick. If a symptomatic student is in school and later tests positive for COVID-19, other students may be sent home to quarantine and miss in-person instruction. If a student gets a COVID-19 test, but comes to school while waiting for results, this could also lead to more student quarantines in the event the test comes back positive. Please be considerate of other students and families, and keep your child home if they are sick or awaiting a test result. For protocols following international travel, please visit the District's [COVID-19 Dashboard](#). If your child tests positive, please contact the school nurse and principal during school hours. If your child tests positive after school hours or over the winter break, please notify the District by emailing [covidreporting@summit.k12.nj.us](mailto:covidreporting@summit.k12.nj.us).

I know this is not the kind of messaging you want to see, especially before a break. We will continue to do everything we can to provide a well-rounded educational experience and prioritize students' academics, mental health, and overall well-being, while navigating a global pandemic. Our community continues to demonstrate the ability to adapt in changing conditions and protocols throughout this pandemic. By all accounts, our students are thriving because of our efforts to provide a safe and healthy learning environment. On behalf of the District, I appreciate your patience and continued partnership, and wish all of you and your families a safe and happy holiday season.

Be well,

Scott Hough  
Superintendent of Schools