



December 11, 2020

SLSD Parents and Guardians,

The Southern Lehigh School District continues to navigate the ever-changing array of guidance, recommendations, and orders from state and federal authorities. We recognize that existing in this time of constant change is difficult and that the related uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 has become a significant stressor for our students, staff, and families. The district will continue to provide routine communication in an effort to ensure that our community has the most up-to-date information. Listed below are updates and reminders as we enter the final weeks of school prior to the winter break.

- **[Order of the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Directing Limited-Time Mitigation](#)** - On Thursday December 10, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania announced an additional limited-time mitigation order that takes effect at 12:01 AM on December 12, and remains in effect until 8 AM on January 4, 2021. As a result of this order, all Southern Lehigh School District in-person extracurricular activities and athletics will be placed on hold.
 - The Southern Lehigh School District will continue to support our students socially, emotionally, and academically. Decisions like this order can manifest themselves in the form of anguish and heartache in our students. Please contact your child's School Counselor to discuss supports that exist within the individual school buildings.
 - The St. Luke's University Health Network's School Based Behavioral Health Team presented the **["Grief/Loss/re-inventing yourself and finding your "Why": When kids lose sports, extracurricular activities, dance, theater, music, band...What can kids, parents and adults alike do to help with the loss of identity due to pandemic"](#)** webinar on September 22 to provide parents, students, and staff with tools to overcome these very specific challenges that continue to arise from the ongoing effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the function of the everyday norms we have come to expect.
- **[Recommendations for Pre-K to 12 Schools Following the Identification of COVID-19](#)** - As was shared on (**[November 25](#)** & **[December 4](#)**), the Southern Lehigh School District is tracking COVID-19 cases in each building over a rolling 14-day period of time. COVID-19 cases are added to the districts Rolling 14-Day Case Count if an individual is **PHYSICALLY PRESENT** in the school building during his/her infectious period (the DOH defines an individual's COVID-19 infectious period as two days before onset of symptoms or two days before the date of the positive result if the person did not have symptoms.) Subsequently, every reported case of COVID-19 in our schools is **NOT AUTOMATICALLY ADDED** to the Rolling 14-Day Case County. If an individual is not physically in the building because he/she is engaged in the SLSD Remote Learning Model, is quarantining away from the school building for a number of days and then develops COVID-19 symptoms, or several other possible scenarios, the COVID-19 positive case would be reported to our community via established communication systems and added to our overall total but **WOULD NOT** be added to the school buildings Rolling 14-Day Case Count. Southern Lehigh maintains web pages documenting the **[aggregate COVID-19 case count](#)** and the **[Rolling 14-Day Case Count](#)**.

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- **Daily Health Screener** – Each morning, prior to leaving home, all students and staff are **REQUIRED** to complete the Daily Health Screener with an at home temperature check. Anyone (staff or students) experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should **NOT** report to school/work and **MUST** contact their School Nurse for additional guidance.
- **COVID-19 Testing** - Any Southern Lehigh household where an individual is being tested for COVID-19 **MUST** notify their SLSD School Nurse. Students awaiting COVID-19 test results **SHOULD NOT** physically report to school while they await results. The SLSD nurses will provide individual guidance specific to the **Exclusion From and Return to School Guidelines**. As a reminder, both **SLUHN** or **LVHN** offer expedited COVID-19 testing services for K-12 students and staff. However, with the demand for testing increasing across the region, the timeline related to results may vary.
- **Mitigation Strategies** - Students and staff **MUST** continue to wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose throughout the school day, unless a student with disabilities whose IEP or 504 teams have granted an exception. Students and staff **MUST** continue to maintain **AT LEAST 6 ft.** of distance throughout the school day including while riding district transportation. Please continue to periodically remind your student(s) about these mitigation requirements.
- **Request for Support** - This resource, designed by the SLSD School Counselors, is meant to ensure that our School Counseling teams can support families in our community who have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Please do not hesitate to use this resource as a way to connect with your students School Counselor should you need additional assistance.
- **Student Technology Assistance** - The SLSD Technology Department continues to utilize a digital helpdesk system that is open to all students who need tech support.

All Southern Lehigh families **MUST REMAIN PREPARED** and have a plan in place in the event that your children are unable to physically attend in-person instruction due to a building being required to transition to remote instruction. School districts across the region continue to experience situations where cases quickly escalate and force a **MANDATED DOH/PDE** temporary closure. Slowing the spread of COVID-19 and maintaining in-person learning requires **COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY EFFORT**.

As we progress through the holiday season, I ask that you all please continue to practice the commonly accepted mitigation strategies that help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community; wearing a mask, frequently washing/sanitizing your hands, maintaining 6ft. of social distance, and limiting gatherings with individuals outside of your household. By working together, the Southern Lehigh School District community can help to ensure that our students and staff are able to safely continue in-person instruction

Kathleen Evison
Superintendent of Schools