



Freeport School District

October 26, 2020

Dear FSD Families and Staff:

This morning, Stephenson County Health Department (SCHD) has advised us of 5 positive cases at Freeport High School, 1 at Freeport Alternative High School, and 3 from Freeport Middle School. At their recommendation, we have made the decision to suspend in-person learning at FHS, FAHS, FMS and 7th-12th grade students at Banks/Bergagna for two weeks, due to the number of positive COVID cases that have been reported this morning. This temporary transition to full remote learning is effective Tuesday, October 27th. This action is being taken as a precautionary measure to aggressively mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in these grade bands. The scheduled date for these students to return to their regular learning schedules is Monday, November 9th. In order to provide teachers and students in these grades ample time to transition to full remote, tomorrow, October 27, will be an asynchronous learning day for students. To help your child(ren) transition to fully remote learning, we have compiled important information on the [Full Remote Parent & Student Quick Guide](#). Please note that the information in the Full Remote Quick Guide is to be followed only when students who are normally in-person or blended learners have gone fully remote.

The revised Board approved [school closure metrics](#) we shared with you on Friday, allow us to transition individual or multiple buildings to full remote learning, as needed.

Please note that the suspension of in-person learning also suspends athletic events/practices until 11/9. 7th - 12th grade parents should also plan to participate in Parent/Teacher conferences remotely.

Nutrition & Dining Services Available: Families who have district students who are switching to full remote effective Tuesday, October 27th, 2020 from FMS, FHS, Alt. HS and Site (7th - 12th grade) may contact the Nutrition and Dining Services Department at 815-801-0106 to schedule a grab n go meal pick up to provide meals for October 27th - October 30th, 2020. Meals for the following week, November 2nd - November 6th will be available for pickup on Saturday, October 31st, 2020 at FHS (empire street entrance) from 9 am - Noon. No pre-order is required for Saturday pick up

In addition we wish to advise you of positive cases in two other buildings and the actions being taken.

Blackhawk Elementary

One positive case has been reported at Blackhawk. It has been determined that there are no close contacts associated with this case. Under the advisement of the Stephenson County

Health Department (SCHD), we have determined that it is unnecessary to close the school or classrooms within the school at this time.

Carl Sandburg School

One student has tested positive at Carl Sandburg. Close contact in this case affects 4 staff members and 3 students. Under the advisement of SCHD, we have determined that while it is unnecessary to close the school, the cohort group affected by this exposure will be transitioned to remote learning, as a precautionary measure. These students will return to in-person instruction on Friday, November 6th. Carl Sandburg School is making contact with the impacted families.

The health and safety of the students and staff across the District remains our highest priority, and we recognize the uncertainty and concern regarding the evolving coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. We continue to follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as the state and local health departments for best practices and procedures to protect everyone's health.

To prevent further spread of the disease, Freeport School District 145 continues to partner with the Stephenson County Health Department in taking the following steps:

- Contact tracing to identify and notify close contacts (i.e., persons who were within six feet of a COVID-positive individual for 15 minutes or longer).
- Placing staff members and students who are identified as having prolonged close contact to the COVID-19 case in remote learning for 14 days. Close contacts will also receive a separate notification from the Stephenson County Health Department.
- Ongoing monitoring of students and staff for signs and symptoms of illness and evaluation of illness reports to promptly identify possible outbreaks.
- Conducting sanitizing and disinfection of the areas impacted by potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

We will continue to enforce safe practices to prevent, promptly identify, and respond to potential COVID-19 cases, as follows:

- All students and staff go through the FSD145 screening, including having their temperature taken prior to or upon entering the building or boarding the bus.
- Students and staff who are ill or displaying COVID-like symptoms will promptly be placed in a separate supervised area away from others until they can be sent home.
- Students and staff are required to wear face masks or cloth face coverings at all times, as previously directed and per school policy.
- We are continuously sanitizing high-touch surfaces including door handles, stair rails, sink faucets, etc.
- We are teaching and reinforcing to students the importance of face coverings, social distancing, and proper handwashing:
 - Students are discouraged from sharing personal items (e.g., water bottles).

Students are learning new ways to greet each other without touching such as glitter fingers, elbow taps and air high fives.

- Students are reminded to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth, and to cover coughs and sneezes.
- Students have been and will continue to be taught and reminded to wash their hands frequently and properly, following CDC guidelines on handwashing.

As always, everyone should monitor their health and stay at home if they develop *symptoms. Sick persons should contact their health care provider to determine if testing is needed. Anyone who develops severe symptoms should seek medical care immediately. If the SCDH has notified you that your child has been in close contact with a known case of COVID-19, please follow their guidance and notify your child's primary health care provider and school.

We are committed to providing your child and our staff with a safe and healthy environment. Thank you for your understanding and ongoing cooperation with our COVID prevention practices and procedures as we work to help protect your children, families, and our staff. For any questions or concerns, please contact your child's school nurse. .

Sincerely,
Dr. Anna Alvarado, Superintendent
Freeport School District 145

*Symptoms of COVID-19 include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

*Severe symptoms of COVID-19 include: trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face.