



Downers Grove Grade School District 58  
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November 22, 2021

Dear Hillcrest Families,

Over the past week, we have seen an increase in COVID-19 cases across the State of Illinois, DuPage County, Downers Grove and District 58. Whenever there is a rise in cases, it is natural that families will have questions about our mitigation strategies and reporting. The purpose of this email is to share information regarding today's three Hillcrest COVID-19 cases, as well as answer frequently asked questions regarding COVID-19 at schools and explain school mitigation measures.

Over the weekend, District 58 was notified that three Hillcrest students have tested positive for COVID-19. The first student is a second grader who got tested on Thursday, Nov. 18, and was last at school on Thursday, Nov. 18 (the positive result was received this weekend). The second student is a second grader who tested positive on Saturday, Nov. 20, and was last at school on Friday, Nov. 19. The third student is a second grader who tested positive on Sunday, Nov. 21, and was last at school on Friday, Nov. 19. The school completed contact tracing, and there were no close contacts while at school. The students will follow all required COVID-19 health protocols before returning to school.

Below are the universal measures that are in place at all elementary schools in District 58. These measures are in alignment with school guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the DuPage County Health Department (DCHD).

- Universal masking is required at all times inside (except for eating and drinking) and on the bus.
- Students must sit no closer than 6 feet while eating lunch.
- Students must sit no closer than 3 feet in the classroom and/or other indoor settings (except lunch where students are required to remain at 6 ft).
- Students are encouraged to frequently wash and/or sanitize their hands.
- All inside spaces are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

- All positive cases and close contacts must be isolated or quarantined in accordance with the IDPH regulations.
- All positive cases are promptly reported to all staff, families, and the DCHD.

Close contacts are defined by the CDC and IDPH as follows:

*Definition of a Close Contact*

*For all individuals where exposure occurred outside of the classroom setting and for adults in the indoor P-12 classroom setting, CDC defines a close contact as an individual not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. **A student who was within 3-6 feet of a confirmed or probable case in a classroom setting is not considered a close contact if both confirmed case or probable case and close contact were consistently masked for the entire exposure period.** Individuals who are fully vaccinated or who tested positive for COVID-19 within the prior 90 days and are currently asymptomatic are not considered close contacts.*

**In general, individuals who are solely exposed to a confirmed case while outdoors should not be considered close contacts.** Schools may coordinate with their local health department to determine the necessity of exclusion for higher-risk outdoor exposures.

*The longer a person is exposed to an infected person, the higher the risk of exposure or transmission. The infectious period of close contact begins two calendar days before the onset of symptoms (for a symptomatic person) or two calendar days before the positive sample was obtained (for an asymptomatic person). If the case was symptomatic (e.g., coughing, sneezing), persons with briefer periods of exposure may also be considered contacts. **Persons who have had lab-confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days who are asymptomatic or those fully vaccinated, according to CDC guidelines, are not required to be excluded if identified as a close contact to a confirmed case.***

At the elementary level, District 58 has set up each classroom and lunch area to avoid close contacts. No student desks in instructional spaces are seated less than three feet apart, and all lunch spaces have students sitting six feet apart. To accomplish this, the District has removed furniture from schools (this is why there are large storage containers outside each school), and students do not sit at lunch tables with bench seating. By doing this, the District greatly reduces the chance of creating close contacts at school.

A COVID-19 outbreak is defined as three or more cases in an individual class with no known epidemiological link. The DCHD determines when a class is considered an outbreak. In the event a class is determined to be an outbreak by the DCHD, the District will follow any and all recommendations from the health agency as to how to proceed. Please note, this does not necessarily mean that the class or school has to close or go remote. Instead, the DCHD may encourage other measures like universal testing of a class. **As of today, no class at Hillcrest**

**School has been labeled as having an outbreak.** If that changes, all families will be immediately notified.

Please continue to encourage your child(ren) to take all necessary precautions regarding COVID-19. As a reminder, [optional weekly screening](#) is available at all District 58 schools and our team is available to answer any questions. We have been very successful in keeping our schools open and safe during the pandemic. We appreciate your continued collaboration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Russell, Superintendent of Schools  
Michelle Rzepka, Principal of Hillcrest School