



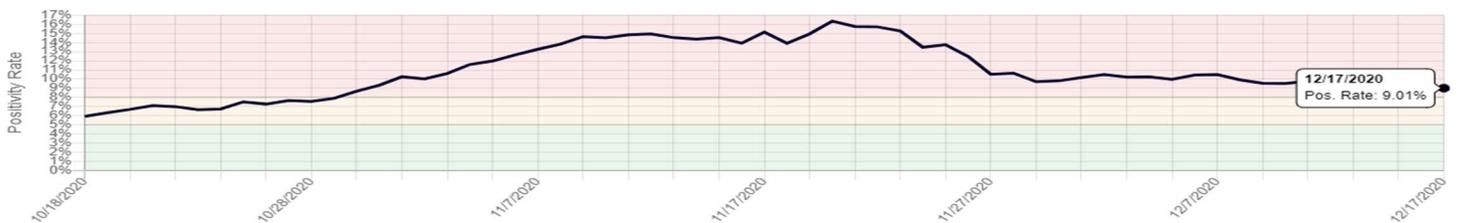
December 18, 2020

Dear Center Cass Families -

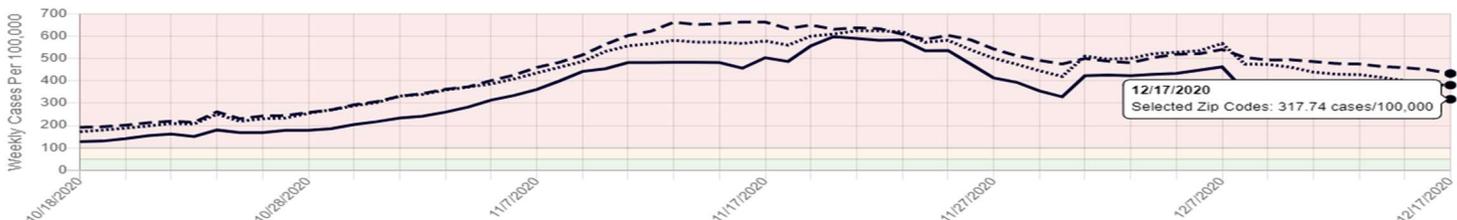
As we wrap up the first half of the school year, I want to thank you for your patience and partnership with an unusual but successful first semester.

Once we are safely able to reopen our doors, the second half of the school year will look much like the first half. We will run a blended model of in-person learning in the morning and remote learning in the afternoons, following the same schedules as before. We will also offer a full remote model as we did the first semester. A letter will be sent to families in early January with your selection.

The year 2021 brings hope. Adult vaccinations have commenced. School personnel are in the second batch of anticipated vaccinations, most likely March or April. Child clinical trials are expected to start next month, and if there are no setbacks in the trials, it is possible that childhood vaccinations will begin late summer-early fall. Aside from vaccines, the positivity rates in our area are starting to come down. The positivity rate of our three zip codes has decreased from 18% to 9% over the past three weeks, and when we get under 8%, we exit the “substantial warning” level, indicating that we are getting close to reopening schools.



In addition, the new daily case rate has dropped from 600 per 100,000 to 317 per 100,000. In order to move out of the “substantial warning”, we need to get under 100 new cases per 100,000 (<http://covid-dashboard.fsm.northwestern.edu/>)



If we continue this trend, we will have cut our numbers in half and be working back toward the safe zone, **which is awesome news!** With that said, if we don't follow the 3 W's over winter break, the trend will change course as quickly as it came down, forcing us to stay closed to in-person learning. It is imperative that we stay diligent to following the 3W's over the holidays. Please wear your masks, keep your distance, and wash/sanitize your hands as much as possible. When we look at our data again in early January, and make our final determination whether to open mid-January, we are hopeful the data returns to the green and yellow areas above, as they were from August to late October.

In regards to the CDC recommended quarantine changes, the D66 FAQ has been [updated](#). The DCHD still prefers the 14-day quarantine for close contact, but in certain circumstances, DCHD will accept a 10-day quarantine with negative test results. Situations will be handled individually by the school nurse in conjunction with the Health Department guidelines. In addition, if you travel to an area over break with a higher positivity than Illinois, please contact the school nurse for guidance on quarantine and testing. You will also notice an updated self-certification slip. We appreciate your cooperation as we prepare for a safe opening. On behalf of D66 schools, we wish each of you a safe and happy holiday season!

Sincerely –

Andrew S. Wise, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools