

In the past week, the number of positive COVID-19 cases has risen sharply at NJ-SP. As of this week, we have over 50 students out due to COVID-19 positive cases, close contact tracing, or choosing to finish the semester at home. In addition, we have several students out due to other illnesses. The majority of these cases are in the Jr-Sr high school.

Given the current situation, beginning Monday, December 14 the NJ-SP Jr- Sr High School will switch to virtual learning for the remainder of the semester. Jr-Sr high school students will report to school tomorrow, December 11 to receive instructions regarding final exams and grades. Having a day to communicate face-to-face with their teachers will be beneficial to wrapping up the semester.

Our elementary school will continue with in-person instruction and will NOT go virtual learning on Monday Dec. 14. Because the number of students and teachers affected by COVID-19 is low in grades K-6, we will continue with in-person learning in those grades. Should the circumstances change, we will make the appropriate move to virtual learning.

With one week left before the holiday break, we want to do everything we can to minimize spread and ensure that families are able to celebrate the holidays safely and with peace of mind.

What will that mean for my student?

Grades 7-12 will move to Virtual Learning from Monday, December 14 through Friday, December 18. Teachers will have communicated instructions regarding final exams and grades on December 11.

Grades K-6 will remain in school with in-person learning through December 18, barring any new developments with COVID-19 cases.

At this point in time, we anticipate to return all students to in-person learning on January 5, as originally planned. However, school officials will continue to monitor statistics and cases over the break.

What does this mean for extracurriculars and athletics?

Extended school closures and virtual learning bring about many challenges and require students to engage with schools in limited ways, which can be challenging for athletics and extracurricular activities. Since August, NJ-SP has been a proponent for continuing extracurriculars and athletics. As educators, we understand the importance of these activities for the social and emotional health of our students. Currently two NJSP winter sports teams are quarantined for an extended

period of time. This, coupled with the general increase in positive cases in school and in the community, has caused us to make the difficult decision to call for a "Time Out." **Beginning tomorrow, December 11, NJ-SP will suspend all athletics and extracurriculars through December 18.** It is our hope that this "time-out" will allow our students, staff, and community to limit their exposure and head into the holiday season feeling healthy and safe. Please note that if circumstances dictate that we continue the suspension of athletics and extracurriculars, that we will do so.