



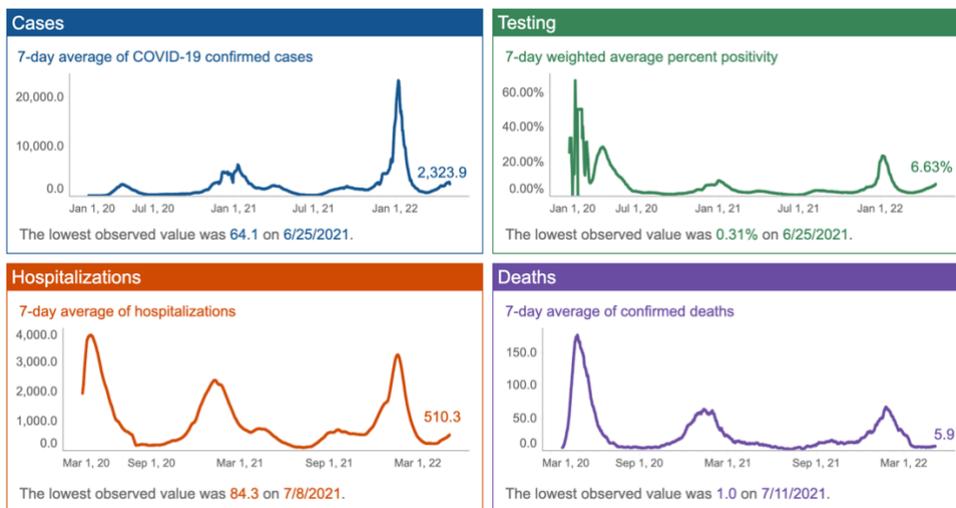
Somerville School Committee

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

8 Bonair Street · Somerville, MA 02145-3246
 jcurley2@k12.somerville.ma.us · www.somerville.k12.ma.us
 T 617-625-6600 x6014 · F 617-629-5661

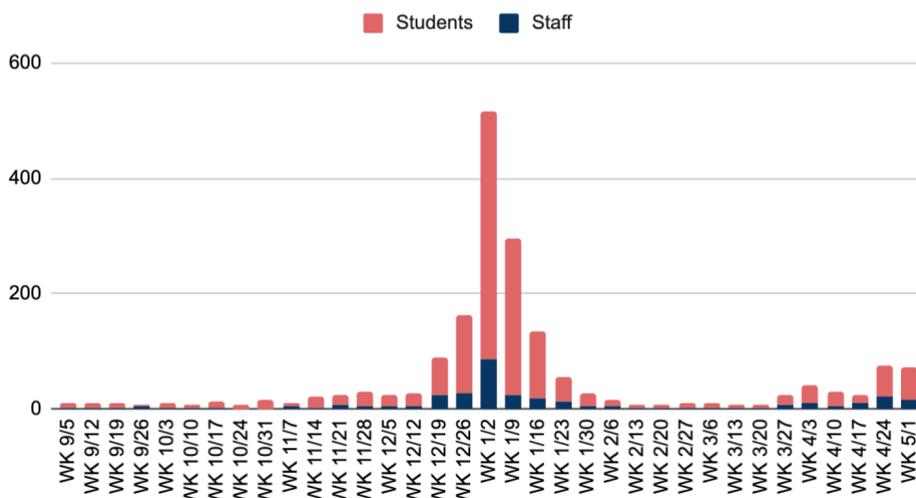
To: SPS School Committee
 From: Elizabeth Quaratiello, BSN, RN, Director of School Health Services
 Jeff J. Curley, Ed.L.D., Chief of Staff
 Re: COVID-19 Status Update
 Date May 9, 2022

This memo provides an update on the current status of COVID-19 in the district and throughout the Commonwealth. Across Massachusetts, cases and testing positivity have been rising since a low in mid-March.



Since returning from April break, the number of SPS students and staff reporting positive test results has also increased.

SPS Positive Cases Total by Week



The vast majority (65-75%) of school cases are being reported through at-home rapid testing. We recognize that many families have welcomed the lifting of mask mandates and other restrictions, but we have also seen the impact that the lessening of personal mitigation strategies has had on our classrooms. Significant rates of COVID-19 disrupt learning and have the potential to keep students out of school for extended periods of time.

Enhanced Temporary Mitigations

For the remainder of May, masks are strongly encouraged for all students and staff while in our school buildings. High quality N95 or KN95 masks are recommended. Masks are available at all SPS schools for any students or staff who request one. We strongly recommend indoor masking for the following reasons:

- Middlesex County transmission levels are currently rated “high,” and the CDC recommends individuals mask indoors at this transmission level. These measures are based on both hospitalization rates and new cases.
- SPS weekly cases have been above 50 since April break, levels last seen in December 2021.
- Significant rates of COVID-19 infection in our schools disrupt student learning and has the potential to compromise our ability to adequately staff our schools.

To keep school transmission low, we ask for the SPS community to please help us with the following additional measures:

- Keep student(s) home if they develop symptoms and rapid test them immediately. Recognize that even mild symptoms such as a scratchy throat or runny nose can indicate COVID-19.
- Report positive at-home test results via the [Form for Reporting Positive Results](#).
- Get your child vaccinated if possible and boosted when eligible.
- Please host larger gatherings, like birthday parties, outside or in well ventilated areas.
- Remember that masks are required for contacts of positive household members regardless of vaccination status.

In addition to masking, we will continue layered mitigation measures that have been implemented throughout the year, including enhanced ventilation, increased fresh air, wellness checks, and weekly routine pool testing and increased classroom rapid testing as needed, as well as access to at-home testing kits. For more information on SPS COVID policies and mitigations, please visit: www.somerville.k12.ma.us/coronavirus-information-sps-families.

Finally, we want to offer sincere thanks to our families, educators, and school nurses for all they've done to keep our community safe and learning on track.