



MORTON

UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

Jan. 14, 2022

Morton District 709 Weekly Update

Student COVID diagnoses increased this past week, consistent with what's happening in the community outside our doors as the Omicron variant runs its course. The better news was that infections among staff were down.

As of Friday, 29 students were considered positive and isolating, compared to 15 a week ago, for an overall infection rate of .91 percent in a student body of more than 3,200. The vast majority are expected to return the Tuesday after this long holiday weekend. Meanwhile, nine staff members were out with the virus, down from 12. Please see the chart below:

Covid Positive Now		1/10/22	1/11/22	1/12/22	1/13/22	1/14/22	%
Staff		10	11	9	6	9	
Students	Brown	0	1	1	3	3	0.84%
	Grundy	4	4	5	4	3	0.78%
	Jefferson	3	2	0	0	1	0.30%
	Lincoln	3	2	2	2	1	0.20%
	JH	2	2	2	2	2	0.40%
	HS	9	13	12	15	19	1.76%
	MA	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
	Total	21	24	22	26	29	0.91%

Again, we recommend that parents review our [Back to School Plan](#) and our [Frequently Asked Questions document](#). Please consult our [COVID reporting form](#), as well.

Meanwhile, we remind families of the new protocols for students and staff who test positive for COVID-19, starting with at-home isolations being reduced from 10 days to five. The counting on quarantine time off starts from the positive test date.

That means that students and staff may come back to school and resume activities six days after the positive test date as long as they no longer have any Covid-19 symptoms. Upon return to campus, students and staff must report to the nurse each of the next five mornings for a symptoms check.

We cannot stress enough the importance of monitoring your students' health on a daily basis and keeping them out of school even with what seem like mild cold symptoms. The diligence of our parents on this point is one of the reasons why we have been able to ***continue having school as normal***. As always, we thank you for your cooperation.

In other school news, it's again time for the 5Essentials Survey, conducted each year by the University of Chicago on behalf of the Illinois State Board of Education. Students, teachers and parents alike are asked to fill out the questionnaire by March 11.

The five indicators that have the greatest impact on student success are effective leaders, collaborative teachers, involved families, supportive environments and ambitious instruction. Research has shown that schools that are strong on at least three of those five factors are 10 times more likely to have superior student outcomes. We encourage participation, as this can be an



Grundy library celebrates fruits of book-buying grant

important tool for us in determining not only our strengths but where we need to improve. The greater the participation, the more accurate the findings.

The survey link for students is [here](#), for teachers [here](#), and for parents [here](#).

Congratulations are due Morton High senior Andrew Sheehan, son of Adam and Dayrim Sheehan – the latter is District 709’s English Language Learner (ELL) coordinator – as Andrew received the National Hispanic Recognition Award from the College Board for his work ethic, dedication to his studies and his score on the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Fine job, Andrew.



Enjoying a new book, and the moment

The Renewal by Andersen Morton Shootout is Saturday at both MHS gyms. The eight-school boys’ basketball tournament, for sophomore/JV and varsity play, starts at 11:30 a.m., with the last game – Morton vs. Champaign Centennial varsity -- tipping off at 6 p.m.

The annual Morton Junior High Dodgeball for Gameball Tournament is scheduled for Friday, Jan. 21. This fundraising event is great fun for a great cause.

Remember that Monday is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, so there is no school.

All in all, the second semester’s first week was relatively uneventful as we got back into the swing of things. It will pick up soon enough, we’ll be prepared when it does, and thank you again for helping us get there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey W. Hill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. It is positioned above the printed name and title of the sender.

Jeffrey W. Hill, Ed.D
Superintendent, Morton Community Unit District 709