

January 24, 2022

Dear Ballou High School:

This letter is to inform you that we have been notified of 5 reported positive cases of COVID-19 at your school. Any positive individuals are no longer on campus and will not return until medically cleared. **Unless you have received instructions directly**, you have not been identified as a close contact of a positive individual and do not need to self-quarantine.

We are seeing a city-wide and region-wide increase in COVID-19 cases, and as with previous case increases within our community, those trends are reflected in the number of reported positive cases at schools. We want to assure you that we are monitoring all our school cases closely and remain in constant communication with public health authorities.

DCPS continues to employ our layered mitigation strategy against COVID-19, including asymptomatic testing, universal masking, and enhanced air filtration. We wanted to take a moment to provide a few resources and reminders for our families:

1. **COVID-19 Testing:** If you need a COVID-19 test and your health care provider is unable to give one, you should utilize one of the free testing sites in DC, including an at-home testing kit option. Visit <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing> for more information.
2. **Free meals for students:** Grab and go breakfast and lunches are available to all DCPS students. Meal sites are located around the district and further information is available on the [DCPS Food and Nutrition Services](#) page. For additional meal resources, families are encouraged to visit coronavirus.dc.gov/food for information, including free grocery sites and more.
3. **Remember to follow Ask, Ask, Look** and continue to monitor your student for any symptoms of COVID-19 every day. If they are [showing any symptoms](#) and/or they are required to quarantine due to being unvaccinated and exposed to an individual who has tested positive from COVID-19, please keep them home. Follow all isolation guidance from DC Health and your child's healthcare provider.
4. **Quarantine periods for DCPS Staff and Students:** DCPS will continue to follow a [10-day quarantine period](#). If an unvaccinated/partially vaccinated student or staff member is a close contact to someone who tests positive for COVID-19, they will be required to quarantine for at least 7 days. Students or staff may return to the classroom on day 8 if they take a COVID-19 PCR test on or after day 5 and receive a negative result. Unvaccinated students or staff who do not take a PCR test must quarantine for 10 days. If your student is identified as a close contact for a reported positive case at school, your principal will provide instructions to quarantine.
5. **Get Vaccinated:** Getting yourself and your child vaccinated is the best way to protect your family against COVID-19, and we urge our families to take this important step for all students 5 years or older. Visit vaccinate.dc.gov for free vaccine clinics across the city, including walk-up sites at schools.

We know that this has been a trying time for our community. We will continue to keep you informed about our health and safety measures and work together to ensure we continue to have a strong, robust, and safe school year.

Thank you,
DCPS COVID Response Team