

March 11, 2022

Dear Students, Parents and Employees,

It has been fantastic to see so many smiling faces these past two weeks! The joy of face to face interaction has resumed unhindered at DCS and you can feel the change. Life is different in our schools and the new energy is uplifting. The transition has been smooth and we have received no reports of any issues related to masking.

In this update, I'll share some changes to our health related practices, report current numbers and ask for parent volunteers to participate in group meetings as part of our districtwide social-emotional needs assessment.

COVID related changes in practice. As you know masks are no longer required indoors but there are conditions under which masks are mandated. When an employee or a student returns after testing positive, the individual must wear a mask in school/at work from days 6 through day 10. This rule comes directly from NYSDOH.

There may be occasions when we return a full classroom of students to masking. For example, when 3 or more students in the same class test positive within 48 hours we may require masks. In the past, we would consider having the class go remote. Moving forward, we might implement masking instead. The decision will depend upon the unique circumstances of transmissions for those involved.

Positive students and employees may not attend school or come to work for 5 days from symptoms onset or the positive test. We will advise students, their parents and our employees of this condition but we will not advise anyone to quarantine as that is the responsibility of the Health Department. When local and state systems were overwhelmed with positives and contacts, school personnel helped DOH and advised quarantines. However, conditions have improved greatly and we are very happy to return to our normal health office responsibilities.

Students and employees with symptoms may not attend school/work at DCSD unless we know of alternate diagnoses. Without alternate diagnoses, students and employees with symptoms at school/work will be sent home. We strongly recommend that all students and employees who had symptoms get tested before returning.

We will continue to offer "test to stay" for any who were in close contact with a positive. However, "test to stay" is not required for close contacts. We strongly recommend that close contacts test to stay and wear a mask for 10 days after close contact with a positive.

We will continue to offer our testing clinic for any and all community members at GCC from noon-2:00PM Monday through Friday. We will discontinue Saturday and Sunday clinic hours.

We will accept positive and negative home test results. We have thousands of test kits available. Visit any school main office or stop into the District Office and we will provide you free test kits for home use.

Positives. Our attendance rate last week was 94% with zero positives. Our attendance this week went from 93% Monday-Wednesday to 94% on Thursday. We know of 4 positives as of 3/10/22.

3/10/22	DPS	EBH ES	DHS	District	Totals
COVID-19 Positive Students	1	0	1	NA	2
COVID-19 Positive Employees	1	0	1	0	2

Parent opinions requested. In an effort to support our school community, the District is in the process of conducting a social-emotional needs assessment. With surveys complete, we are moving on to parent focus groups. There will be one parent group for each school. This opportunity will permit parents to discuss how they feel about school issues impacting their children's learning and development.

Are you concerned about bullying, values, discipline, fairness, equity or activities and opportunities for your children? Something else? If so, this is a great opportunity to speak with other parents and an independent facilitator who is not a school employee and make your voice heard. Data collected from the parent groups will contribute to the findings of our overall needs assessment.

The assessment will generate a comprehensive report that school administrators and the School Board will use to set long range goals for the District and to develop plans to achieve those goals. If interested please send an email with your name and phone number to: dcsparentgroup@dansvillecsd.org

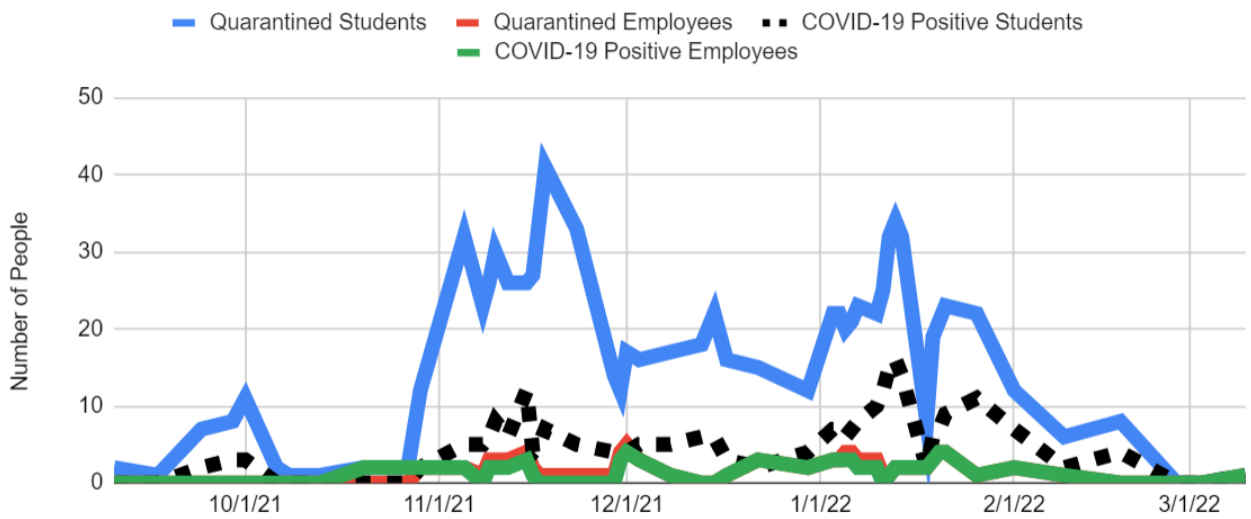
With your help we can improve our schools. Please consider participating and if you have any questions about the needs assessment or changes in COVID protocols, please call me at 585.335.4000 x 2300.

Sincerely,

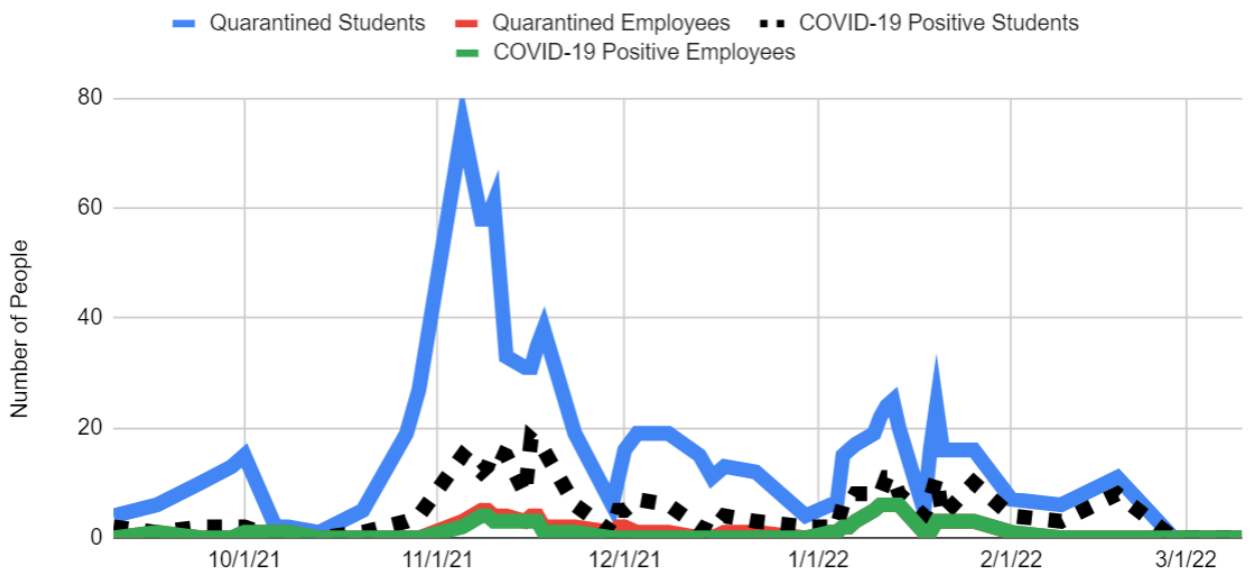


Paul J. Alioto
Superintendent of Schools

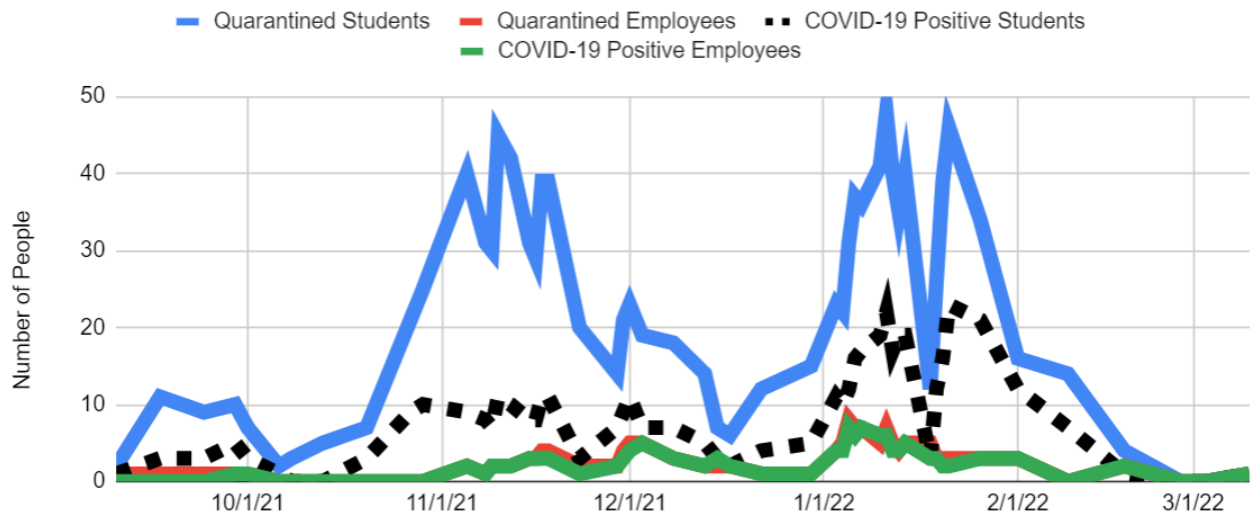
Dansville Primary School



EBH Elementary School



Dansville High School



From Previous Updates

School Budget Advocacy. Dansville Schools are not getting their fair share of funding from NYS. [Please follow this link to send an advocacy letter to our elected officials.](#) Select Governor Kathy Hochul, Lt. Governor Brian Benjamin, Senator George Borrello and Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes. Enter “Fiscal Equity for Dansville School Children” in the subject line. A sample letter is included at the end of this update for you to copy and paste or, if you are so inclined, write your own. They need to hear from you and we need your help. Thank you.

Fiscal Equity for Dansville Schools

The purpose of this message is to make you aware that the executive budget proposal fails small rural school districts like Dansville CSD.

The executive budget for P12 education is not based on equity or inclusivity and we need powerful voices like yours to advocate for education funding equity in NYS. What school communities are left out? Those serving high needs rural populations like Dansville.

To provide for a sound basic education in 2021-22, we had to rely on additional funding from Washington because we don't receive adequate funding from Albany.

While many districts are using these funds to bolster reserves, others like Dansville are using promised funds to maintain quality programs for students and preserve a sound basic education.

Fast forward to 2022-23 budget planning and double digit percentage increases in Foundation Aid for wealthy school districts. While these districts with a robust tax base are building reserves in anticipation of future capital projects and tax cuts, we are straining to make ends meet in our budget for next year.

The executive budget proposal was a step in the right direction but Dansville CSD was left out in the cold with a \$480,000 increase inclusive of what the State owed the District. This doesn't even keep up with COLA. DCSD would have received an additional \$430,000 if the Foundation Aid owed was added to the minimum 3% increase. How much more in compounding aid have we lost due to the 17 year delay in fully funding Foundation Aid?

The estimated increases in DCSD's health insurance, FICA and TRS for 2022-23 is \$1.5M. We have little control over those costs. 2% on the tax levy generates only \$185,000 and our community has grown weary of tax increases every year. Quick math informs us that the Foundation Aid increase and local capacity cannot meet expense driven needs and we will face a serious budget gap if the State doesn't provide our fair share of Foundation Aid.

Please refrain from referring to schools as "flush with money" and call out those who make such misguided and inaccurate assertions. Inequity remains and it can be found in communities that provide milk, wheat, soy beans, corn and potatoes to the rest of the State.

Please think of Dansville and other high need rural districts in your work until we can finally agree that equity in education funding has been achieved for all of New York's children.