



**St. Mary's County Public Schools  
Central Administration**

**Office of the Superintendent**  
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**Dr. J. Scott Smith**  
Superintendent

November 8, 2020

Dear St. Mary's County Public Schools Staff and Families:

I regret to inform you that as a result of community spread of COVID 19 in St. Mary's County, we will be cancelling all in-person instruction for the upcoming week, November 9-13, 2020. As I am sure you are aware, COVID 19 cases are surging across the nation and our state. On Thursday evening, November 5, Governor Hogan held a [press conference](#) detailing the current surge and emphasizing the importance of taking every precaution to contain the spread of COVID 19. The state is recognizing rates that it has not seen since July, with a Maryland statewide positivity rate nearing 5% and a new case rate per one hundred thousand of over 18. He has called this a "pivotal moment" and we agree.

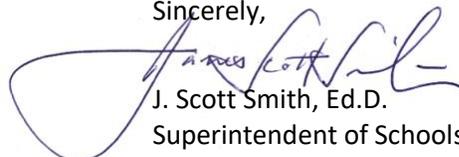
St. Mary's County has been well below the state in both metrics - positivity rate and case rate per 100,000, but in the past three days, the county has added 60 new cases resulting in a total of 95 new cases for the past week. This is the highest one week case rate since May. Many of these positive cases can be traced back to social and family gatherings held over the Halloween weekend. Pausing in-person instruction for the upcoming week will provide the St. Mary's County Health Department the time needed to go through the essential process of contact tracing - isolating those positive, testing those exposed, and using quarantine to contain spread.

St. Mary's County Public Schools and all those whom we employ have worked tirelessly over the past eight months to support our children and provide the best possible instruction in the worst possible time. We have followed CDC guidelines of masking, social distancing, and hygiene. We have put our students first and sacrificed much to get where we are right now and the last thing we want to do is move backward but being able to continue in-person instruction requires the entire community to be committed to this goal. The numbers from the last three days, show that our community is moving in the wrong direction.

We will continue to work daily with St. Mary's Health Department and follow their advice. We urge everyone else to do the same. An update will be provided mid-week and we are hopeful that the trend we currently see will reverse. It is up to each one of us to make that happen.

Again, as a result of the number of positive COVID 19 cases recorded for the past three days in St. Mary's County, all in-person instruction for the upcoming week will be cancelled.

Sincerely,



J. Scott Smith, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

**St. Mary's County Public Schools**  
**Phased-In Return of Students for Hybrid Instruction**  
**Fall 2020**

**Update – November 8, 2020**

Dates	Student Group	Notes
<p><b>Week of November 9-13, 2020</b></p>	<p><b>ALL STUDENTS</b> will be learning <i>online</i>.</p> <p><b><i>NO in-person instruction.</i></b></p>	<p><b>Online Learning</b>  <i>Meals will continue to be available for students, with pickup times on Monday and Thursday, from 11 to 1 at each school. Students engaged in athletic and extracurricular activities will be able to continue participating, following all safety protocols.</i></p>
<p><b>Phase 3</b>  <b>To be determined</b>  <i>pending review of local data and consultation with St. Mary's County Health Department</i></p>	<p><b>All students return:</b></p> <p><b>Elementary Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head Start and PreK<sup>+</sup></li> <li>• Grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</li> </ul> <p><b>Middle School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 6, 7, and 8</li> </ul> <p><b>High School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12</li> </ul>	<p><b>SAIL, COMPASS</b> will continue with their regular schedule with in-person instruction being delivered each school day (Monday-Thursday)</p> <p><b>Head Start and PreK</b> will continue with AM and PM sessions- for in-person instruction Monday-Thursday.</p> <p><b>All grades, K-12, will begin</b> in-person instruction 2 days per week with the A group attending Monday and Wednesday and the B group attending Tuesday and Thursday. Fridays will remain an online work day with dedicated office hours and opportunities for intervention and enrichment as well as professional development and instructional planning.</p>