

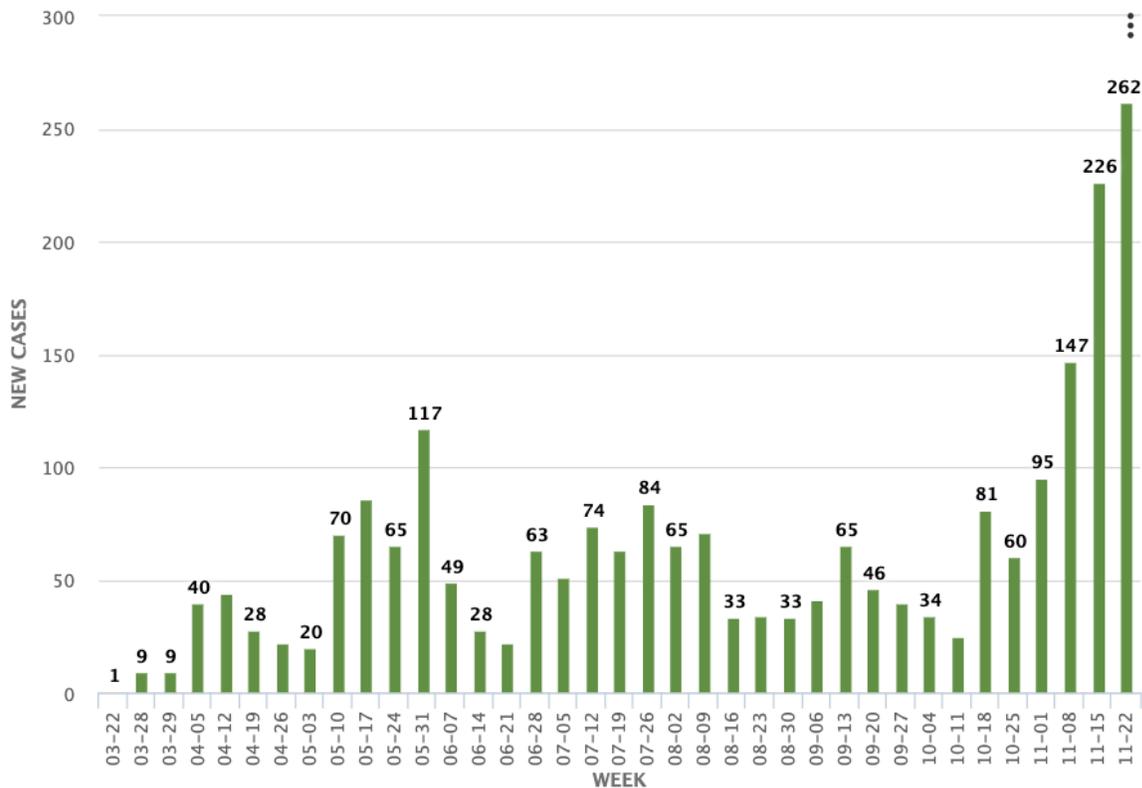


December 1, 2020

Dear St. Mary's County Public Schools Families:

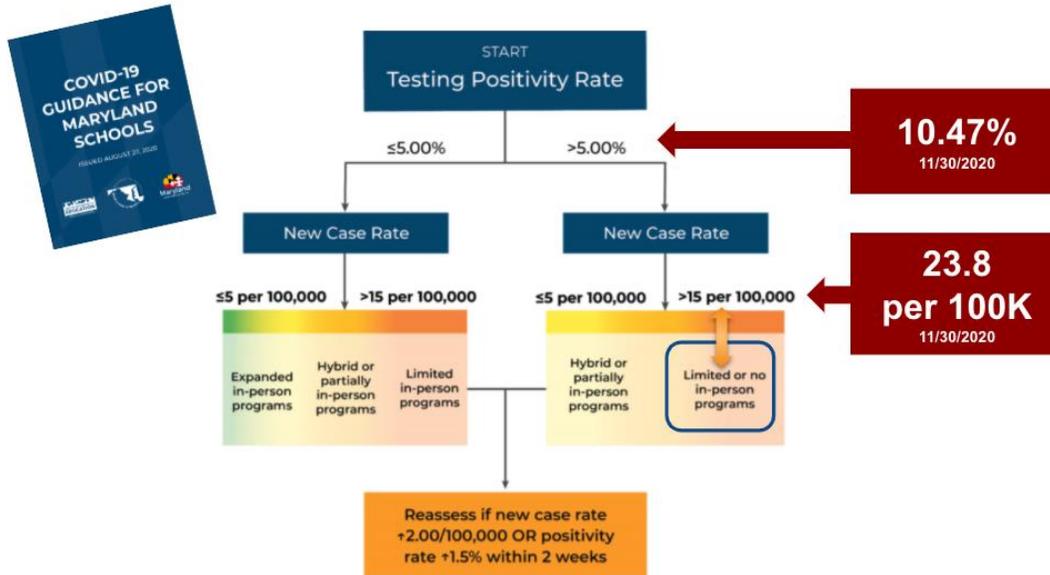
Our community continues to battle the fall surge of COVID-19. Throughout the month of November, St. Mary's County, just like the State of Maryland and our Nation, continued to see rising positivity rates of COVID-19. Last week, St. Mary's County recorded 262 new COVID 19 cases - setting a new record after setting records the previous two weeks. This is before we see the impact that Thanksgiving gatherings may have on our community. It is evident that community spread of COVID 19 continues unchecked in St. Mary's County.

New Cases by Week



In our previous letter, we stated that we would follow this data closely and if the trend did not reverse, we would have to continue with virtual instruction. St. Mary's County far exceeds the thresholds set by Governor Hogan and State Superintendent Salmon in their "[COVID 19 Guidance for Maryland Schools](#)" to resume in-person instruction. As a result of this, **we will continue with virtual instruction through the month of December.**

St. Mary's County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability in matters affecting employment or providing access to programs.



Meal distribution for students will continue at all school sites according to the regular schedule - 11 a.m. through 1 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. When schools are closed for Winter Break, special meal distribution sites will be established on Monday of each week (December 21 and December 28). More information about this additional food distribution service will be provided in the coming weeks.

The resumption of athletics and in-person extracurricular activities will be delayed. Previously, the winter sports competition season was scheduled to begin on December 7, 2020. Extracurricular activities are tentatively planned to resume on January 4, 2021, pending improved health metrics in St. Mary's County.

COVID-19 issues have also presented a challenge as to how our system collects and confirms student information. We ask all parents/guardians to review information, including Emergency Contact Information and our Impact Aid form, which is now open for families to complete and submit electronically. Parents may access the Impact Aid form via the Parent Portal in Home Access Center and families have until December 18, 2020, to submit. For your convenience, all electronic forms have a mobile responsive user interface and can be accessed from any mobile device such as a cell phone, tablet, iPad, etc. Information will be sent directly to families as to how to complete these forms.

For more information, please tune in to the December 2, 2020, Board of Education meeting, beginning at 8:00 a.m., which will be streamed on our [SMCPS YouTube channel](#) and at www.smcps.org/streaming.

Sincerely,

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