Our monthly Hoʻohaʻaheo newsletter will temporarily transition to a COVID-focused weekly edition as we strive to provide updates and helpful resources. As students are kept at the forefront of all that we do, we want to ensure employees and school communities are informed. Please keep an eye out for this weekly digital update.

Updates from Interim Superintendent Hayashi

Aloha,

Thank you for tuning in to another edition of our Weekly COVID Updates. I am pleased to continue our communication as we move forward in creating safe and healthy learning environments for our students.

Decreasing Case Counts
» There has been a significant decrease in reported COVID cases across school campuses.
» Last week's case count is down 50% when compared to that of the week prior, and down 71% when compared to cases from the week of Jan. 10-14, when the omicron variant peaked.
» I’d like to express my gratitude to our teachers, administrators, staff and students for their commitment to the mitigation strategies and safety protocols in effect so that we can keep our schools safe and continue to prioritize in-person learning.

Public Opinions on COVID Response
» You may have seen public poll results published this week by the Honolulu Star-Advertiser regarding the Department’s response to the pandemic.
» Results showed a combined 57% of poll takers (800 registered voters) rated the Department’s response to the pandemic as “Fair,” “Good” and “Excellent.”
» Meanwhile, of those surveyed who have children in the public schools (243 respondents), 40% agreed with continuing with in-person learning during the pandemic.
» The Department values community feedback, whether it comes from parent surveys, staff meetings or public polls.
» Navigating this ever-changing pandemic has not been easy, especially for a system of our size — 257 schools across the state, 160,000 students and 40,000 employees — but as with all decision-making, we always strive to keep our students at the heart of everything that we do.

HIDOE Case Counts

A total of 1,188 confirmed or probable cases were reported across Hawaiʻi’s 257 public
schools from Jan. 31-Feb. 4 for a daily average of 238 cases (as of Feb. 8). For the latest case count information, visit bit.ly/HIDOECOVID-19Updates.

Question of the Week

**Q:** Does the Department's COVID dashboard reflect accurate data or are cases from some schools still missing?

**A:** Due to the surge in omicron cases last month, there was a delay in case dashboard reporting by some schools. That backlog of cases has since been resolved but processing times for incoming cases may still vary. As a result, daily totals may increase or decrease as cases are finalized. We encourage checking the dashboard often for the most up-to-date figures.

Here is how school-level cases show up in the dashboard:

- Parents/guardians report positive/probable case to school
- School reports info directly to the state Department of Health (DOH) via online reporting system
- DOH sends the HIDOE a de-identified report of cases reported for the day
- HIDOE dashboard gets updated with a one-day reporting lag

It should be noted that the reporting of case notifications to families and close contacts is a priority of the Department and is separate from inputting the cases into the dashboard. These notifications have not been compromised.

ICYMI

» Kalani High School hosted its fifth COVID vaccination clinic last month, providing dozens of students, staff and community members with
access to first or second dose shots, as well as booster shots for those ages 12 and older.

» Mayor Rick Blangiardi and the City and County of Honolulu opened Oʻahuʻs second isolation and quarantine facility in Ewa Beach for those who test positive for COVID and do not have a space to quarantine. Those seeking admission should call Aloha United Way at 211.

» Have questions about the COVID vaccine? Check out Our Best Shot Hawaiʻi’s new website for resident-focused information on everything you need to know.

The Hawaiʻi Keiki Health Hotline delivers equitable access to free health resources and care for HIDOE students. Call the free and confidential hotline at (844) 436-3888 (toll-free) Monday through Friday, excluding holidays and breaks. Services can be made available in most languages, including Hawaiian, through a translation service.