

January 11, 2022

Dear Families,

You may have heard that the CDC recently updated their guidance for schools to allow for a shorter isolation and quarantine time period. School districts must follow Washington State Department of Health (DOH) guidelines and the state DOH just changed their guidance to align with CDC. Our school district is aligning with these changes.

This is a lot of information to keep track of, which is why we are summarizing the changes below. Here is a link to review the [state's guidance](#) in detail.

Summary of Recent State Guidance Changes

Isolation and quarantine guidance was shortened to 5 days in many cases, and testing recommendations were updated. The new guidance applies to both those who are vaccinated and unvaccinated. Also, the Test to Stay testing program has been expanded to include staff and extracurricular activities.

Isolation: Isolation requirements have been reduced to 5 days with testing and proper masking.

- **If a person with COVID-19 symptoms tests negative** with a molecular or antigen test, they may return to school following the latest DOH guidelines as long as they are not a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and subject to quarantine. If the test is conducted with an antigen test, It is recommended they either have a confirmatory molecular test or repeat an antigen test within 48 hours. If the individual is using an at-home test, they should carefully follow all package instructions.
- **If a person tests positive** for COVID-19 with a molecular or antigen test, they can return to school when:
 - 5 days have passed since symptom onset, or since positive test date if no symptoms are present; AND
 - No symptoms are present, or symptoms are resolving; AND
 - No fever within the past 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
 - Students and staff should continue monitoring for symptoms and wearing a well-fitting mask around others through day 10 (days 6-10) both in and out of school, including during extracurricular and sports activities.
 - Individuals who have been in isolation may test on day 5 of their isolation period. An antigen test is recommended. If the test result is positive, they must continue to isolate until day 10. If the test result is negative, they may return to school and should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others until day 10.

Quarantine: Students and staff who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 **should quarantine for at least 5 days (day 0 through day 5) after their last close contact:**

These groups need to quarantine:

- Ages 18 or older who have completed the primary vaccine series (or single J&J) but have not received a booster shot when eligible.

- Those who are not vaccinated or have not completed a primary vaccine series.

These Groups Do Not Need to Quarantine:

- Ages 18 or older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters.
- Are ages 5-17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days.

There are three quarantine options for close contacts.

- For schools participating in a Test to Stay program, students and staff eligible may attend school, school-related extracurricular activities, and school-aged child care during their quarantine period if they participate in serial testing.
- For schools not participating in a Test to Stay program – Students or staff must quarantine at home. Quarantine can end after 5 full days beginning after the last close contact (the date of last close contact is considered day 0) if no symptoms have developed and after receiving a negative test result from a test taken no sooner than day 5.

The Test to Stay program has been expanded

The Test to Stay testing program, which is meant to help keep students in school, has been expanded. Students and staff eligible for Test to Stay may attend school, school-related extracurricular activities, and school-aged child care during their quarantine period if they participate in serial testing. This is known as modified quarantine. Students or staff who opt out of testing or who have accommodations that allow them to attend school and not wear a well-fitting mask or face shield are not eligible for modified quarantine.

Symptom Tree Document to be Updated

With the changes to guidance, the symptom decision tree document is now out of date. The Washington State DOH will be updating this document this week and we will share this document as soon as we get the updated version.

In the meantime, please keep students home if they are sick and get them tested for COVID-19.

We understand it is difficult to keep track of the many changes to guidance. We are working to update our materials to line up with the new state DOH guidelines as quickly as possible. Thank you for your continued patience as we respond to the rapidly evolving COVID landscape.

Sincerely,



Brian Freeman, Superintendent