

September 3, 2021

Dear NPS Staff , Students and Caregivers,

As we are returning to in person learning, we would like to share some information with you. We would like to remind everyone that if you are presenting with new and persistent symptoms of illness, please follow-up with your primary care provider for care and testing. If you are traveling, especially to a higher risk area, upon return please monitor for any symptoms of illness, seek testing with any symptoms and continue to wear a mask while indoors and when distancing is not feasible.

Please review the below information. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your building health staff or email lsafron@northampton-k12.us .

Definitions

- **Close contact:** Any individual who has met the following criteria
 - Being within 6 feet of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes or more
 - Any direct exposure to infectious secretions such as respiratory secretions without proper personal protective equipment, regardless of duration of exposure
 - Exposure occurs within 48 hours before or within the 10 days following the positive test or onset of symptoms - whichever occurs first - for the individual who has tested positive
- **Quarantine:** The quarantine period accounts for the full potential incubation period for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Individuals who are identified as close contacts based on exposure criteria are subject to quarantine. Quarantine may be between 7 days and 14 days depending on test results and presentation of symptoms.
- **Isolation:** The isolation period accounts for the full infectious period of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Isolation generally lasts 10 full days from onset of symptoms or positive test, whichever occurs first, and until symptoms have been resolved for at least 24 hours.
- **Fully Vaccinated:** At least 14 days have passed since receiving the second dose of an mRNA vaccination series (Moderna or Pfizer) or since receiving the single dose of Johnson and Johnson Janssen vaccine.

Quarantine and Isolation Protocol

- **Suspected COVID-19 Based on Symptoms**
 - Any individual who has new or persistent symptoms of illness that cannot be explained by a preexisting health condition will be referred to their primary care provider or other testing site for follow up testing
 - Individuals must stay home from school until they have obtained their test result
 - If unable to be tested or if choosing not to be tested, individuals will be required to stay home for 10 days from onset of symptoms or provide proof of alternative diagnosis from their primary care provider

- **Isolation:**
 - Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 must stay home from school, and from all other activities and public spaces
 - Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 will receive guidance from the district's nurse contact tracers as well as their local public health department or a contact tracer from the Commonwealth's Community Tracing Collaborative
 - Individuals will not return to school until they have been cleared from isolation based on the above time-based criteria and symptom-based criteria, as determined by their local health department

- **Quarantine:**
 - All individuals who have a known exposure to COVID-19 based on the aforementioned exposure criteria should monitor themselves vigilantly for any symptoms of illness for 14 full days following exposure
 - All individuals who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated at the time of exposure will be required to quarantine. There are 3 quarantine options that are available to close contacts who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated.
 - **7-Day Quarantine:** Close contacts who are completely asymptomatic, and who receive a negative COVID-19 test at least 5 days after their last exposure, may leave strict quarantine after 7 days. If they present with any symptoms after this point, they must return to quarantine and are urged to seek testing.
 - **10-Day Quarantine:** Close contacts who are completely asymptomatic may leave quarantine after 10 days of strict quarantine without obtaining a negative test result. If they experience any symptoms after leaving strict quarantine, they must return to quarantine and are urged to seek testing.
 - **14-Day Quarantine:** Close contacts who begin to experience any symptoms of illness following exposure, regardless of test results, must quarantine for 14 full days following last exposure.

- **Fully Vaccinated Close Contacts**
 - All close contacts who are fully vaccinated and are identified as close contacts in the school setting will continue to be notified by the school of their exposure
 - Per Massachusetts Department of Public Health, individuals who are fully vaccinated *at the time of exposure* do not need to quarantine. This quarantine guidance for fully vaccinated individuals may be subject to change based on data surrounding breakthrough infections.
 - At this time, close contacts who are fully vaccinated will be required to do the following:
 - Vigilantly monitor for any new symptoms of illness during the 14 days following exposure (and at all times)
 - Wear a mask in all public settings and when around people from different households for 14 days or until receiving a negative test result
 - Obtain a test 3 to 5 days following exposure, as available given personal circumstances.

- If experiencing any new symptoms of illness, immediately begin to quarantine. Close contacts experiencing new symptoms following exposure will be urged to seek testing if possible.

Thank you for your continued collaboration with health and safety guidelines for our school community.

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