



January 6, 2022

Dear Families,

As we return to school following the winter break, I would like to call your attention to some of the changes we have made to our COVID protocols that now align with the most recent [update to the DESE/DPH Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios - SY 2021-22](#) delivered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to Superintendents and Schools on December 30, 2021.

**Guidelines for Positive COVID cases:**

Positive cases will now isolate for 5 days (instead of 10 days) and can return to school/work/regular activities on day 6 so long as they are either asymptomatic, or their symptoms have improved, they are fever-free for 24 hours, and they continue to wear a mask through day 10. There is no need for public health nurses or school nurses to verify symptom improvement has occurred by day 5 with cases (students/parents). Everyone *should* know to stay home if they are sick with fever, cough, congestion, sore throat, etc. **When students return to school and school-associated activities, they will continue to follow the mask mandate currently in effect and will need to socially distance while at lunch for an additional 5-days.** The classroom in the back of the small cafeteria is the space for students who prefer a socially distanced lunch option. Outside is also an option, weather permitting.

Student-athletes who are returning to school must follow the school's [Gradual Return to Play protocol](#).

Calculating the Quarantine and Post-Quarantine calendar (See example chart below)

Day 0	Symptom Onset
Day 5	Last full day of isolation
Day 6	Return to school following the school masking policy Socially distanced Lunch Athletes: Begin the Gradual Return to Play Protocol
Day 11	Follow the school masking policy Lunch as preferred

**Quarantine Guidelines for Asymptomatic Close Contacts:**

**Asymptomatic, fully vaccinated close contacts:** Close contacts who are asymptomatic and fully vaccinated are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols. At this time, fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks following the completion of the Pfizer or Moderna series or Two weeks following a single dose of Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine.

**Unvaccinated, School-Based Close Contacts:** Test and Stay will remain in place for unvaccinated students and adults who are identified as school-based close contacts. Students will participate in normal school activities, however, the testing period is shortened to 5-days (from 7 days) from the last known exposure date. Students who are eligible to participate in this program will be notified by a school administrator or nurse.

**Unvaccinated, Out-of-school close contacts:** If you are unvaccinated and have been identified as an out-of-school close contact, you are not eligible for test and stay, but the quarantine period has been reduced to 5-days (from 7 days). You can exit quarantine on day 6 so long as you can produce a Negative COVID test and you have remained symptom-free. Although the PCR test is the most accurate form of testing and is advised, antigen-testing will be accepted. Proof of negative results needs to be forwarded to the school nurse prior to returning to school (copy of lab results or picture of the negative test).

**Symptomatic Close Contacts:** Please refer to the DESE/DPH protocols above.

**At-Home Covid Testing:** At-home tests are unofficial results and the local board of health cannot follow up with at-home tests and perform appropriate contact tracing. Positive cases identified through an at-home test should isolate for 5 days and notify their own close contacts. PCR testing within 48 hours of a positive at-home test is advised for confirmation of the at-home test result.

**5-day Quarantine Chart**

Symptom Onset/+ -test	Asymptomatic/Improving/Fever Free for 24 hours-Return to school
Sunday	Saturday (Monday Return)
Monday	Sunday (Monday return)
Tuesday	Monday
Wednesday	Tuesday
Thursday	Wednesday
Friday	Thursday
Saturday	Friday

We have done our best to capture the information contained within the new DESE/DPH guidelines but encourage you to reach out to the school nurses if you have any questions.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Jo Carabatsos". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, decorative flourish at the end of the name.

Mary Jo Carabatsos Ph.D  
Principal