



August 19, 2021

Dear Hartford School District Teachers and Staff,

I am writing to you with more specific information about our school district's COVID response plan. We will be using a three tiered approach to infection prevention in our schools:

1. Preventing the virus from entering the schools.
  - a. **Anyone, vaccinated or not, with any symptom(s) that could be related to COVID-19 must stay home and not come to school.** This has not changed from last year and the school nurses will be available to provide guidance to you on what is needed in order for you to be cleared to return to school depending on the specific circumstances. If you become ill while at school, please isolate and make arrangements to leave the building as soon as possible.
    - i. If you are concerned that one of your students is ill, please contact the school nurse.
  - b. We will be limiting visitors in the buildings. Visitors will be allowed for educational purposes and pre-arranged meetings.
    - i. We will not host in-person open houses this fall.
2. Preventing transmission of the virus in schools.
  - a. **Everyone, vaccinated or not, must wear a mask while inside any of the school district buildings until further notice.** This is our primary risk reduction strategy and one that is strongly recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).
    - i. At this time, we will not be changing this based on the percentage of vaccinated students.
    - ii. Masks will not be required while outside. You are encouraged to be outdoors as much as possible, especially for PE, music/band and eating.
    - iii. You do not need to wear a mask if you are alone in your room or office.
  - b. Avoid mixing students as much as possible except for educational purposes. At the elementary level, each grade can be considered a "pod" and mix as needed.
  - c. Masks and bell covers must be used for band/chorus while practicing indoors. At this time, we will not have live audiences for indoor performances. Please plan on recording or live streaming any upcoming concerts or performances that you may be planning in the near future.
  - d. There will not be the frequent cleaning/disinfection of high touch surfaces. Lunch tables/surfaces where people eat should be cleaned with soap and water after and/or in between use. We will clean and disinfect affected areas following a case of COVID in one of our buildings.
  - e. Encourage students to frequently wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
3. Removing sources of infection.
  - a. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19, will need to quarantine as directed by the Department of Health or school nurse.
    - i. Affected schools will work with the Department of Health to do contact tracing and identify anyone who may have been exposed to the individual who tested positive.
    - ii. Please use assigned seats in your classrooms to facilitate contact tracing in the event it is necessary.
  - b. Any unvaccinated individual who knows they have been exposed to COVID-19/has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, must stay home and quarantine. At this time, vaccinated individuals do not have to quarantine following an exposure UNLESS they develop any symptoms.
  - c. We will be offering the option for both vaccinated and unvaccinated staff and students to participate in weekly surveillance testing. This is not intended for anyone experiencing any symptoms. Consent will be required in order to participate and you will receive more information about this in the coming weeks.



Again, I thank you for your cooperation and partnership in keeping our schools as safe as they can be. As previously stated and as you have seen, information related to COVID changes quickly and frequently and I will continue to keep you updated on any changes that need to be made to our plan.