

January 2021

Dear Families,

Welcome back to the New Year and the promise of healthier, happier times to come in 2021! As we wait for vaccines to become widely available, the mitigation strategies that you are all familiar with will be more important to adhere to than ever before. Our whole school community has worked together since school began in September to prevent COVID 19 spread in our schools. We have shown that our mitigation efforts work. We are moving into the “homestretch”, so don’t let up now!

As a reminder, here are the protections that we are asking everyone to continue to comply with:

- **Do a daily health check at home each morning.** Students with fever or symptoms of illness should stay home and be assessed by a healthcare provider.
- **Wear a mask.** Every student should have a set of masks made from tightly woven, two ply material. Masks should fit well and cover the nose and mouth comfortably. If a student is wearing a gator, make sure that it is at least two ply thick and that it is not stretched thin over the nose and mouth when worn.
- **Keep your distance.** Keep as much space as possible between yourself and others during the day. Pay attention to the distance markings and signage in all of the schools.
- **Wash your hands** frequently for at least 20 seconds and don’t touch your face. Most viruses, including COVID-19, enter the body through mucous membranes of the eyes, nose and mouth.
- **If helpful, please review** the [COVID-19 Training](#) module. The basics have not changed!

These COVID resources are now available to the Newtown School Community:

- **Testing is available at the NMS School Based Health Center** for any staff, student, or family member who has symptoms suggesting COVID. Testing is free and is offered as a drive up service. Call Nancy Kettner to schedule a test: 203-270-6114 or email KettnerN@ct-institute.org.
- **There is a [DASHBOARD](#) available on the district website.** The intent of the dashboard is to make district COVID information readily available to the community. The first slide on the dashboard gives an informational summary of the numbers of staff and students who are currently quarantined due to having COVID or direct COVID exposure. Cases are listed by school and by the date that they were reported to the district, along with the number of students and staff quarantined in each case.

Planning for local vaccine distribution is underway. Currently, limited information is available from the state on when there will be vaccines available for the general public. We do have clinic sites, equipment and staff lined up, so that as the vaccines arrive, we will be prepared to administer them.

Stay strong. Take care of each other. Better times are coming, and we will get there together.

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Mask up! Back up! Wash up!