

August 22, 2022

Dear Staff and Families,

The Connecticut Department of Public Health and the CDC have both recently released updated guidance for schools related to COVID 19 management. The new recommendations reflect a general increase in immunity due to vaccinations and previous infection with the virus. The changes that you can expect to see in Newtown schools' COVID management are as follows:

- Students and staff members who have been exposed to COVID 19 but test negative and remain free of symptoms will no longer be required to quarantine, regardless of vaccination status. They will be advised to self test and to wear a well fitting mask for 10 days from the date of exposure.
- Students and staff members who have minor symptoms with no known exposure to COVID, such as nasal congestion or a scratchy throat, will be allowed to attend school if they continue to test negative daily for COVID. Those with minor symptoms should wear a mask until symptoms resolve.
- There will no longer be a weekly screening program (Project COVID DeteCT) for students and staff. Anyone who is experiencing possible COVID symptoms is strongly encouraged to use a home test kit. Test kits will continue to be available through the school nurses in each school building.
- School level information on current COVID cases will now be available on the State of CT Department of Public Health portal rather than on a district dashboard: [COVID-19 in PK-12 Public and Private Schools | Connecticut Data](#)
- **There is no change in the message that anyone who is experiencing significant symptoms of illness (fever, cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, etc) should stay at home, isolate from others and test for COVID. Anyone who tests positive for COVID should isolate themselves at home for 5 days. After 5 days, the individual can return to school if their symptoms have resolved and they are able to wear a mask effectively for 5 additional days.**

Vaccinations remain the first line of protection from COVID 19. The school district continues to work with the Newtown Health Department and with Griffin Hospital to provide easy access to COVID vaccine clinics for all. The next scheduled COVID vaccine clinic will be held on **August 25 in the Newtown High School lobby from 3 pm to 7 pm**. It is open to all eligible age groups for Moderna and Pfizer vaccines and boosters. Please see the attached flyer.

We continue to rely on our strong school community to pull together in our effort to keep everyone healthy and in school this year. Thank you to all for your teamwork over the past years. As the saying goes, it truly "takes a village", or in this case a town, to meet the challenges of this pandemic.

Here's to a happy and healthy 2022-23!

Best Regards,

Anne Dalton

Health & Wellness Coordinator