

## **Lexington School District Close Contact Protocol**

**The Quarantine Selection Process:** A quarantine of healthy students and staff is initiated when either the school or the local health department is informed that a student or staff member has tested positive for Covid-19. That notification launches an immediate investigation by both the school administration and health departments to determine which other students or staff members were in close contact with that positive case (within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes during the day).

School administrators, teachers, coaches, and bus drivers will do their best to determine which students were in close contact with the positive case for the day that the student tested positive, as well as the two days (48 hours) prior to that test date. We consider all people who were in close contact with the positive case throughout the school day, including those: 1) in classes, 2) at lunchtime, 3) during athletics and activities, and 4) on the bus.

The health department also does an independent investigation by contacting the positive case and asking with whom he/she has been in close contact over the past few days. Some of these close contacts may have occurred outside of school, such as family, friends, and church groups. The health department and the school district then share the school-related names of those in close contact.

**The Communication Process:** After students and staff are identified as close contacts, a school administrator communicates with the parent of each student determined to be in close contact, and shares the following “talking points” of information with the parent:

- You are being contacted because, during school, your child has been determined to have been in close contact (6 feet) for over 15 minutes with another person who has tested positive for Covid-19.
- The potential exposure occurred on (specified date).
- Due to confidentiality reasons, we are not divulging the name of the person who tested positive.
- Your child will need to quarantine for 14 days after the time of the exposure, which will be through (specified date). He/she may return to school on (specified date).
- A negative test result will not shorten the quarantine length. (CDC Guidelines)
- You should be getting a call from the local health department regarding next steps, and you may consult your own physician as well. If the local health department gives you quarantine dates that are different from what I have told you, please let the school principal know right away.
- The local health department may ask you to monitor your symptoms and inform you that your quarantine is not just limited to school attendance.

- Your student's teachers will be made aware of the quarantine and will make every effort to keep your student informed of the lessons and assignments. Like any other excused absence, quarantined students will be granted some grace in terms of making up work and taking tests.
- Please go to our website and review the document, "Lexington School District Close Contact Protocol" for more information.
- If you have any questions, please contact the school principal, school nurses, or Superintendent.

**"Close Contact" Return to School Process:** There is no requirement for a doctor's release nor a negative COVID-19 test result in order to return to school after the 14 day quarantine. However, the IDPH is requiring close contacts to provide the school with a letter from the local health department which communicates the approved return to school date. This will act as verification that the school and local health department agree on the return date and the "ticket" for a student to return to school.

**Testing for Covid-19 :** Due to being identified as a close contact, you may decide to have your student tested during the healthy quarantine due to your concern or curiosity. Here are a few facts to consider regarding student testing:

- The school cannot, and will not, require a student to be tested for Covid-19.
- If you choose to have your child tested, please be aware negative test results must be provided to the school before they will be allowed to return. There is a possibility the waiting period for results may extend beyond the designated day of return.
- If you decide to have your student tested, please inform the school of any **positive** results.
- **If your student tests negative, it will not shorten the length of the quarantine at all, based on current CDC guidelines.**
- If your student tests positive, it could change the length of the quarantine, depending upon the testing date, symptoms, and other criteria. The school and health department will also contact trace your student and quarantine close contacts following the same procedure outlined above.

### **Household Exposures**

For close contact exposures that occur in the home when a parent, sibling, or other member of the household tests positive, the length of the quarantine can depend on several factors. Since it is a more complex and more continuous exposure, the school relies on the health department to make the determination of a return date of the student. This return date will be on the letter that the health department provides the student.