



Colchester School District

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December 18, 2020

Dear CSD Community,

We're all excited about the upcoming winter break. A well-deserved chance to relax, decompress, celebrate the holiday season and welcome in the new year. While we still have two days of school next week, we wanted to give some information about winter break and our return to school on January 4th.

Governor's Orders

At the press conference today, Dr. Mark Lavigne implored Vermonters to celebrate the holidays only with those that live in their house. All the efforts and sacrifices that everyone made for Thanksgiving paid off because we saw no significant outbreaks or spikes related to gatherings. Both he and the Governor asked Vermonters for perseverance once again, [requesting we not travel or gather for the upcoming holidays](#).

What to Do if You Travel or Gather

Many families will follow the guidance of the governor and health department, however, for a variety of reasons some will travel, and some will gather with others, so we want to provide information on what to do next.

- [Get tested](#) as soon as you return or after the gathering. More information about testing is below.
- [Quarantine](#). You will need to complete either a 14-day quarantine or a 7-day quarantine followed by a negative test result, as long as you do not experience symptoms.
 - Quarantine means staying home and away from others. Do not go to work or school, or out to do errands or recreation. This helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 before a person knows they are sick, or if they are infected with the virus and don't have symptoms.

Getting Tested

The Health Department has been clear that anyone can get tested at any time. There are plenty of tests available to Vermonters. We know there are a lot of options out there and we recommend going to one of the [Health Department's testing sites](#). The tests are free, and currently, they're hearing that the turnaround for results is less than 48 hours. You can schedule your test in advance of the date using their online portal registration. As of today, they have openings as far out as January 3rd and are adding dates and locations every day.

For more information about scheduling a test visit:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/testing/where-get-tested>

The link to register for a test and a list of dates and locations are a little way down the page under "Free Health Department Testing."

Amy Minor
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Please do not go to a Health Department testing site if you have COVID-19 symptoms. In that case, you'd want to call your health care provider so they can refer you to testing.

CSD's Plan to Return to In-Person Learning After Winter Break

After a long winter break, we know that our staff, students, and their families will be eager to return to school. Our current plan is to return to school for in-person learning on Monday, January 4th. We hope that the break goes smoothly and that no changes result in us needing to pivot to a remote learning environment. We'll be watching the Governor's press conferences, monitoring the health data and staying in communication with our employees to ensure we can staff our buildings. Based on the information we have today, we believe we will be able to return as scheduled on Monday, January 4th.

Here are some steps we can all take to successfully return to in-person learning on January 4th.

- Continue to follow the Governor's Orders
- Avoid multi-household gatherings
- Avoid out-of-state travel
- If you think you may have been exposed, [get tested \(it's free!\)](#)
- Wear a mask
- Wash your hands
- Stay 6 feet apart from others whenever possible.
- Stay home when you're sick (do not go to the grocery store, do not go to work, do not go to school)

A Request from our Nurses

Our nurses ask that you continue to keep them informed over the break if your child comes down with any symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19. Something as simple as a quick email will help keep them in the loop and provide you with some support and guidance.

Winter Sports

It was again confirmed today at the governor's press conference that winter sports are still on hold. They are continuing to monitor case counts and we will keep our students, families and coaches informed when we hear more.

Thank You

The 2020 winter break will be different for most of us this year and we thank you in advance for making the necessary adjustments during these challenging times to keep our communities safe and our students in school. I have heard from many families and employees who are finding creative ways to honor family traditions and the spirit of the season in a new way. There are so many ways to express love, gratitude and generosity that won't put your family or others at risk of getting sick. With an open mind and a flexible plan, we will get through to the other side of this pandemic.

Be well,

Amy Minor
Superintendent of Schools