



# Colchester School District

Administrative Offices, 125 Laker Lane, PO Box 27, Colchester, Vermont 05446

Phone: (802) 264-5999 • [www.csdvt.org](http://www.csdvt.org) • Fax: (802) 863-4774

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January 1, 2022

Dear CSD Community,

Happy New Year to everyone in the CSD Community. We are working to make the transition back to school on Monday as safe and healthy as possible. This includes staying home when sick, testing, and quarantining when necessary. This email outlines some important updates specific to Colchester Schools, as well as the latest COVID-19 guidance from the Vermont Department of Health and the CDC regarding isolation and quarantining, and additional guidance around recommended testing. These new guidelines go into effect today.

## **Stay Home When Sick**

We cannot stress enough how important it is for our employees and students to stay home if they are showing symptoms, even if they are vaccinated. *Please remember, students and staff with any signs of illness should not attend school.* We are still seeing high COVID-19 case counts in Vermont and we all need to do our part to keep our community safe. If a nurse calls you to discuss the health of your child, please be kind. We are doing the best we can to keep our learning environments healthy.

## **Staffing Concerns and CSD Employee Reminders**

As we look ahead to the next few weeks, please be aware that schools may need to move to remote learning for a short period of time if we are unable to staff a classroom or building as a result of COVID-19. Building administrators and our COVID Response Team will be keeping a close eye on case counts and staffing availability in each of our school buildings. CSD employees are reminded to please contact their building administrator and substitute scheduler as soon as they become aware that they are unable to attend work. If employees have not yet provided consent for Response Testing or the Test to Stay Program, please also fill out the two consent links provided in this letter for your school.

## **COVID Testing**

We hope our families were able to take advantage of the Agency of Education's offer to pick up rapid COVID test kits for students this week and are using them, as directed, to test your student before bringing them to school on Monday morning. All CSD employees may participate in PCR surveillance testing at their individual schools on Monday. We strongly encourage all employees to take advantage of this testing opportunity.

## **Be Prepared: Sign Up For Test to Stay and Response Testing**

If your child is unvaccinated and identified as a close contact, they will have to quarantine UNLESS your child is signed up for the Test to Stay Program. This program allows students to take a test each morning and continue to come to school during their quarantine period. We

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**Amy Minor**  
Superintendent  
of Schools

**George Trieb**  
Business & Operations  
Manager

**Carrie Lutz**  
Director of Student  
Support Services

**Gwendolyn Carmolli**  
Director of Curriculum  
& Instruction

cannot stress this enough, if you would like for your child to be able to participate in Test to Stay, you must fill out the state-wide consent form AND a form for your child's school *ahead of time*. This consent also allows for your child to be tested for COVID if they become symptomatic at school and need to be tested before returning. It can often take the state days to process the consent forms, therefore if you haven't already, we strongly encourage you to fill them out now.

### Test to Stay Sign Up Forms

1. State Consent Form: [SY22 COVID-19 Testing Program Consent Form](#)
2. School Consent Form:
  - Colchester High School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/FJHT9>
  - Colchester Middle School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/AQJYA>
  - Malletts Bay School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/78RW9>
  - Porters Point School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/6FEYG>
  - Union Memorial School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/38Z7G>

### New Definition of Fully Vaccinated: Importance of Getting a Booster Shot

This week, the CDC changed their recommendations for quarantine, isolation, and how "fully vaccinated" is defined. Fully vaccinated means that a person has either:

- Completed a full course of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines *within the last six months* or received a J&J vaccine *within the last two months*, OR
- Completed a full vaccine course as defined above *more than six months ago* **AND** has also received a booster.

**Anything other than those two options is considered not fully vaccinated.**

### What to Do After Testing Positive

Here is the link to the [most recent guidance](#) from the state regarding the isolation timeline after a positive test. We've outlined some of the changes below.

#### How to Report Positive Test Results

1. Please self-report all at-home positive antigen tests including "Kits for Kids" to the [Vermont Department of Health here](#):
2. Contact your doctor to report any positive test result and to get advice.
3. Call and/or email your school principal and school nurse. (If an employee also contact your building's sub scheduler.)
4. Please note, a positive home antigen test does not require a follow up PCR test.

#### Isolation Timeline

The COVID positive person should isolate at home away from others.

- Stay home and [isolate](#) for 5 days.
- You can leave your home on day 5 if:
  - You never had symptoms, or your symptoms have improved and you feel better, AND
  - You have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers, AND
  - You wear a mask around others through day 10.

When possible, it is recommended that you have two negative antigen tests performed at least 24 hours apart beginning no earlier than day 4.

For more information, visit this site of the [Vermont Department of Health](#) webpage.

**Notify Close Contacts**

Please notify out-of-school close contacts about the positive diagnosis. The District’s COVID Response Team will notify in-school close contacts to protect your privacy. A close contact is a person who is within 6 feet or closer for 15 minutes or longer in a 24 hour period. The infectious period begins 2 days before the start of symptoms or 2 days before the positive test if there are no symptoms.

**What to do if You are a Close Contact**

The Vermont Department of Health has a webpage dedicated with [information on what to do if you or your child is identified as a close contact based on their vaccination status](#). We’ve included two graphics below that summarize the information.

If You:	Then Do The Following:
Had your booster shot <b>OR</b> Completed your Pfizer or Moderna vaccine series within the last 6 months <b>OR</b> Completed your Johnson & Johnson vaccine within the last 2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wear a mask around other people for 10 days. You do not need to <a href="#">quarantine</a>.</li> <li>● A test on day 5 is recommended. If you test positive, follow the steps in <a href="#">What do do if you test positive for COVID-19</a>.</li> <li>● If you develop symptoms at any time, get a test and stay home and away from others until you get your test results.</li> </ul>

If You:	Then Do The Following:
Are not vaccinated <b>OR</b> Completed your Pfizer or Moderna vaccine series more than 6 months ago and have not had a booster shot <b>OR</b> Completed your Johnson & Johnson vaccine series more than 2 months ago and have not had a booster shot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stay home and <a href="#">quarantine</a> for 5 days.</li> <li>● You can leave your home on day 5 if:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ you have no symptoms</li> <li>○ AND had one negative PCR or LAMP test OR two negative antigen tests performed at least 24 hours apart beginning no earlier than day 4</li> <li>○ AND you wear a mask around others through day 10.</li> <li>○ AND, when possible, it is recommended that you have one negative PCR or LAMP test on or after day 5 or two negative antigen tests performed at least 24 hours apart beginning no earlier than day 4</li> </ul> </li> <li>● If you test positive, follow <a href="#">What to do if you test positive for COVID-19</a> guidance</li> <li>● If you develop symptoms at any time, get a test and <a href="#">isolate from</a> others until you receive your test results.</li> </ul>

Be well and we look forward to welcoming your student back to school in the New Year!

Colchester School District