



RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools*

January 1, 2022

Dear RPS Community,

Happy New Year. I hope that 2022 brings us all health, peace and joy. I appreciate your time and attention to the following important COVID-19 updates for our schools.

Late yesterday, we received several updates from the Connecticut Department of Health as it relates to COVID-19 and schools. Early this morning, our RPS team came together, processed these updates and are communicating them with you as quickly as we can in anticipation for the opening of schools on January 3.

A brief summary of the primary shifts from CT DPH are outlined below:

- Schools will follow the recently released CDC guidelines on isolation-which means that regardless of vaccination status students and staff who test positive may return to school on the 6th day after testing positive so long as symptoms are significantly improved and fever free for 24 hours. Masks must be worn at all times for an additional 5 days including recess;
- Screen and Stay is embedded within the new guidance;
- Schools may accept 'at home' rapid or PCR test results; and,
- Contact tracing for **in school exposure** will now be optional.

A full copy of the CT DPH letter can be found here: [School Contact Tracing/Quarantine/Return to Activities Letter](#). Further, I am also sharing [here](#) a letter sent by the Commissioner of Education on the reopening of schools and continued efforts with mitigation strategies, as well as [updated guidance on remote learning](#) for specific situations.

RPS will follow the new guidance from the CT DPH, that said, please read the bullets below carefully:

- If you are sick, or have any symptoms, **please stay home**; Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nasal congestion or runny nose, vomiting or diarrhea;
- **Students and staff returning between days 6 and 10 after a positive test will be required to** further distance during lunch and snack times;
- If you are submitting an 'at home' test, please take a photo of the test result. Write the name and date on the test and email your school nurse;
- Further updates on RPS' contact tracing protocols will be provided.

Parents/guardians of students who are returning to school on the 6th day after testing positive with COVID-19, whose symptoms are significantly improved and have been fever free for 24 hours, must complete the attached [form](#) no later than Sunday, January 2 at 8:00pm. Staff, please communicate with your principal directly if you have tested positive for COVID-19 over the holiday break.

RPS has received a small allotment of test kits designated for staff who are experiencing symptoms. Staff will receive a separate email on how to access a district-provided testing kit. We are expecting additional testing kits for students in the coming weeks.

Again, parents/guardians of students who are returning to school on the 6th day after testing positive with COVID-19, whose symptoms are significantly improved and have been fever free for 24 hours, must complete the attached [form](#) no later than Sunday, January 2 at 8:00pm.

In other COVID updates, parents/guardians of 5-11 year olds who signed up for the January 4th mobile vaccination clinic will receive a confirmation email of their assigned time slot by the evening of January 2nd.

Lastly, RPS will continue its voluntary, in-school COVID-19 test screening program for unvaccinated students in our elementary and middle schools this coming week. Parents of students who previously registered who are now fully vaccinated are no longer eligible to participate. The CSDE has indicated that this program may be expanded in future weeks.

Thank you, and warm wishes for 2022.

Susie

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