



SPARTA COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT #140
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01/12/2022

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are pleased to share that the **isolation and quarantine period for students and staff members testing positive with COVID-19 or unvaccinated persons considered a close contact has been reduced to five days** after the Illinois Department of Public Health and Illinois State Board of Education announced the agencies have adopted CDC guidance for P-12 schools that halves the isolation and quarantine period. This is the only NEW CHANGE in this document since the original development of our Transition to In-Person Learning found on our website [COVID-19 Information | spartadistrict140](http://www.sparta.k12.il.us/COVID-19%20Information). This is another simplified version. The Centers for Disease Control updated its guidance for P-12 schools on January 6.

As a result, effective immediately, we will implement the updated guidance. Within 24 hours of notification or contact tracing, building principals will contact staff, students and families who are currently impacted by a quarantine with their revised return to school date, if applicable. **This announcement does not change the state of Illinois' mask requirement for anyone inside school buildings.** Our participation in the mask mandate for schools allows us to follow this new guidance.

Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, all schools were charged to resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-30 and 105 ILCS 5/34-18.66. Effective January 11, 2022, Executive Order 2022-038 requires all schools and school districts provide remote instruction to any student that is excluded who are confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19, who are close contacts to a case, or who exhibit COVID-19 like symptoms, as we have been practicing the entire school year. **We are committed to remaining in person learning at school to stay engaged, to learn effectively, and to maintain social-emotional wellness.** A recent study from the CDC suggests that remote learning can be challenging for many students, leading not only to learning loss, but also worsening mental health for children as well as parents, and I would argue, educators.

To summarize the 33 page document provided by ISBE last night, our district continues to successfully implement all required layered prevention and strategic measures to protect our school community.

1. Promote and/or provide COVID-19 immunization for all school personnel and eligible students. [Offer community vaccine clinics.](#)
2. Facilitate physical distancing. Schools should configure their spaces to provide space for physical distancing to the extent possible in their facilities. [Encourage use of pods \(3 ft dist\) in school.](#)
3. Implement or provide provisions for COVID-19 diagnostic testing for suspected cases, close contacts, and during outbreaks, as well as screening testing for unvaccinated students according to the CDC's testing recommendations. [Testing at mobile clinic.](#)
4. Improve ventilation to reduce the concentration of potentially virus-containing droplets in schools' indoor air environments. [Air purification systems throughout schools.](#)
5. Promote and adhere to hand hygiene and to respiratory etiquette. [Resources on webpage.](#)
6. Encourage individuals who are sick to stay home and to get tested for COVID-19. [Webpage.](#)
7. Clean and disinfect surfaces in schools to maintain healthy environments. [Custodial protocol.](#)

As further means to proactively prepare staff and students to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, we also:

- Require that all school personnel be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or submit to weekly testing. Collect school personnel vaccination and testing documentation.
- Promote and/or provide COVID-19 immunization and/or information for all school personnel and eligible students by means of clinics and the Superintendent Scoop.
- Require all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to pre-K-12 schools to wear a mask while indoors, regardless of vaccination status.
- Administrative contact tracing and exclusion of students and staff consistent with public health guidance or requirements.
- Implement or provide provisions for COVID-19 diagnostic testing for suspected cases, close contacts, and during outbreaks, as well as screening testing for unvaccinated students according to CDC's testing recommendations.

Thank you for your continued support, patience, and understanding during these difficult times. We have been able to get through this situation as seamlessly as possible because of you. Please call your child's school with any questions or concerns if you are identified as a close contact or positive case, as they have specific exclusion charts to follow for contact tracing.

Yours in education,



Dr. Gabrielle Schwemmer
Superintendent of Schools