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35353 Curtis Blvd · Eastlake, OH 44095 · Phone: (440) 946-5000 · Fax: (440) 946-4671

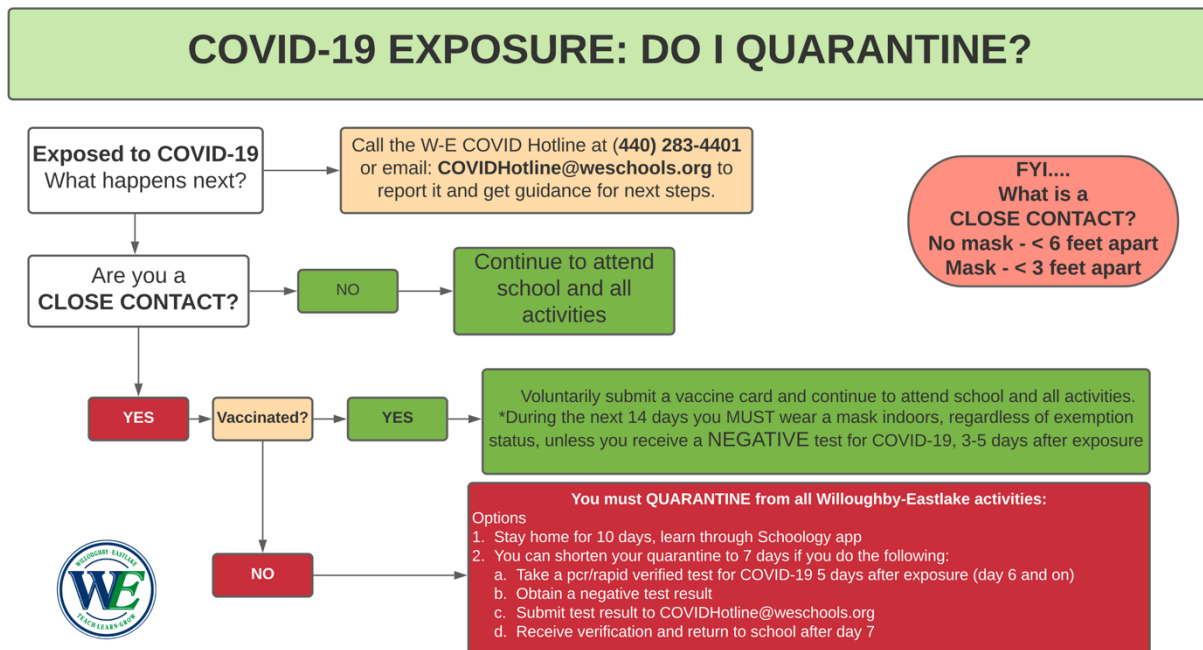
September 1, 2021

Good evening,

On behalf of Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools, I would like to thank you for your patience as we have worked through the challenges presented to us by COVID-19. The recommendations that we have been given since the beginning of the pandemic are constantly changing, and we are working to absorb those into our daily practices as quickly as possible by collaborating with experts in public health. The decisions that have been placed upon all school districts have been unprecedented and require time to determine what is relevant, fair and just. Please be assured that as decisions are being made, Willoughby-Eastlake places the well-being of our students, staff and community at the forefront of each. ***We want your children in school and we want to keep them safe and healthy as we work to create the very best educational environment possible.***

Thank you for taking the time to read through the information in this letter. Some of the information is presented to you as a reminder of practices we already have in place and some is to inform you of new protocols that impact your student.

Quarantines



There has been much discussion about a school district’s (or local board of health) ability to [mandate a quarantine](#). It is our understanding that local health departments can recommend a quarantine, but not mandate.

Because of the change in Ohio law during the last several months, the mandate must now be implemented by local school districts. School districts, such as Willoughby-Eastlake, have the ability to mandate a quarantine when supported in their policies and administrative guidelines.

If your child is identified as a “close contact” and you are informed that they must quarantine, you are encouraged to contact the district at COVIDHotline@weschools.org if you believe a mistake has been made. You are also encouraged to inform us if your child has been vaccinated. If vaccinated, and verified by the district, students are currently exempt from a quarantine. You must inform us by inputting your information here: www.weschools.org/covid19 and you must wait for approval prior to your child returning to school and extracurricular activities. We would ask that you please be patient as we input data on a daily basis.

If you send your child to school and they are not exempt from quarantine, you will be notified and asked to pick your child up from school. For those parents who refuse, students will be removed from class and will remain in a designated area until the end of the school day.

Vaccines and Quarantine Procedures

At the beginning of the school year, we were instructed to follow the guidelines established by House Bill 244. This meant that all students were treated the same, regardless of vaccination status. Consequently, if a vaccinated student was identified as a close contact, they would be required to quarantine. This week, following the FDA approval of the Pfizer vaccine, we were advised that this is not the case and we should change our protocols. If you choose to, you can now submit proof of your child’s vaccination here: www.weschools.org/covid19 and avoid quarantines, provided that your child is symptom free. Your child may still be identified as a “close contact” and if this happens, you will simply need to inform the district of their vaccination status and they will be removed.

COVID-19 Dashboard

If you would like to obtain updated information about the cases of COVID-19 in your child’s school or the district, you can find it here: [COVID-19 DASHBOARD](#). Please keep in mind, the spread of COVID is rapid and we will update the dashboard as often as possible. All attempts will be made to update the dashboard daily.

Classroom Access from Home

If your child is at home, whether that is due to a district closure caused by COVID-19 or a quarantine, we want them to continue to learn. When planning for the 2021-2022 school year, public health professionals and the Ohio Department of Education advised Ohio school districts to prepare for full-time, in-person instruction. They believed that the vaccines would prevent closures, quarantines and remote learning. We have seen, based on the current cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and in our district, that this is not the reality we face. Consequently, we are working diligently to ensure that your child is able to access their classroom materials online.

If your child is at home due to a quarantine or a closure, they should access their daily instruction through the Schoology app. If they are having difficulty with this, please reach out to your classroom teacher or your building principal.

Subject to Change

As you have heard numerous times, we are operating in conditions that are fluid. As we receive information about COVID-19, the laws that impact our protocols, changes in educational mandates, and legal updates we will adjust our daily practices. Because these changes sometimes take time to implement, we ask for your patience.

In closing, when working collaboratively as one, with the best interest of the children of Willoughby-Eastlake at the forefront of our actions and decisions, we will have a positive impact on the future of our community.

Sincerely,

Steve Thompson

Superintendent, Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools