



MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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JANET WALLING - SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Mountainside Parents and Guardians:

October 4, 2021

Good evening and I hope that you are well. It is hard to believe that we already completed our first month of school and are into October! What a great month we had as we successfully navigated our reopening to full day instruction. The students have been fabulous at following our protocols; the staff has been busy focusing on both the educational and emotional needs of their students; and the weather cooperated nicely as we all adjusted to a full day schedule including lunchtimes. I hope you had the opportunity to attend our recent Back to School Nights to hear about the structure and programming in place for your child. Please continue to communicate with your child's teacher and/or building principal if any questions or concerns arise throughout the year.

I would like to share a few reminders regarding our health and safety protocols. These guidelines are subject to change based upon [NJDOH and NJDOE guidance](#) and any changes in local and regional transmission rates.

- **Positive COVID Diagnosis** - Students or staff who test positive for COVID will follow a 10 day exclusion from onset of symptoms or positive test result if asymptomatic.
- **COVID Exposure:** Unvaccinated students/staff who are identified as **close contacts** will be excluded for a minimum of 7 days (return on day 8) if they receive a negative PCR test on day 5-7. In the absence of a negative test, a 10 day exclusion will be enforced (return on day 11).
 - As per NJDOH guidelines, in the event that the District's region (Central East) is designated as a high (orange) level of community transmission, close contacts will be excluded for 14 days, without the ability to test and return sooner. **Please note that as of the most current [COVID Activity Level Report](#) Mountainside is designated as orange.**
- **FULLY vaccinated close contacts, or students/staff who have had COVID in the past 90 days,** do not need to quarantine as long as they do not exhibit any symptoms.
 - CDC recommends monitoring for symptoms and testing after 3-5 days as a precaution.
- Your child should stay home if he/she does not feel well or exhibits any COVID-like symptoms, regardless of vaccination status.
 - An alternate diagnosis without a negative COVID test is not acceptable for individuals who meet exclusion criteria to return to school during periods of moderate, or high, community transmission.
- Unvaccinated children should stay home if any family member is sick or displays COVID-like symptoms.
- Unvaccinated children may not come to school if ANY person in your household has taken a COVID test and is awaiting the result. He/she may not come to school until the test result comes back and is negative.
- **Travel Guidelines** as recommended in consultation with our school physician and local Health Department:
 - **Domestic Travel** -- NJ does not currently have a travel quarantine in place, therefore unvaccinated students are not required to quarantine after domestic travel. Individuals are encouraged to follow existing CDC guidance and monitor for symptoms.
 - **International Travel** -- Unvaccinated individuals will be required to quarantine for 7 days (return on day 8) with a negative test on days 3-5, or 10 days without testing (return on day 11).
 - Student vacations are discouraged during the time school is in session and remote instruction will not be offered. Vacations will be considered as unexcused absences.
- Please do not hesitate to contact the school nurse if you have questions regarding any of these protocols.

Your continued support and partnership is appreciated as it allows us to continue our Road Forward in a successful and safe manner for everyone.

Janet Walling