

Barre Unified Union School District

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Barre City Elementary & Middle School • Barre Town Middle & Elementary School • Spaulding High School • Central Vermont Career Center

Doing whatever it takes to ensure success for every child.

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To: All BUUSD Teachers and Staff Members
From: David Wells
Re: Revised guidance regarding students and staff being required to quarantine due to COVID-19
Date: February 16, 2021

Everyone's efforts to keep staff and students safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19 is greatly appreciated. It is only natural that staff would be concerned when we hear of COVID-19 incidents. The District has and will continue to work closely with the Vermont Department of Health when making decisions around COVID-19.

We have the responsibility of keeping students and staff safe while allowing students access to their education and staff access to their jobs. With this in mind, I am revising BUUSD guidance about asking students and staff to quarantine themselves.

Staff and students must continue to quarantine if a member of their household tests positive for COVID-19. They must also stay from school if they have COVID-19 symptoms. This follows the Department of Health guidance.

We are no longer following the practice of asking students and staff to quarantine if a member of their household is quarantining when that household member is not symptomatic and has not tested positive for COVID-19.

What we have learned from working with the Department of Health about COVID-19 events this year is that the highest risk comes from having close contact with an individual who is COVID-19 positive. The Department of Health does not recommend asking contacts of close contacts to quarantine. For example, a student would not need to quarantine if their father was symptom free and quarantining because someone at his work was positive for COVID-19. The student is not considered a close contact. They are a contact of a non-symptomatic close contact. Simply said, our practice of being stricter had resulted in a large number of students and staff missing school and work when the Health Department does not see them as a risk.

Another evolving part of this picture has been access to COVID-19 testing. We all now have easy access to testing. Many individuals get tested even when they do not have symptoms and are not a close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive. These adults and students would not need to miss school while waiting for their results because they themselves are not symptomatic and they are not living with someone who is COVID-19 positive.

There is a lot of information about COVID-19 protocols and procedures to keep track of. The best place for BUUSD staff to look for updated information is the [Reopening Plan for BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT](#).

Here are the recently updated sections of this plan:

NEW 2/15/21

Responding when a case of COVID-19 is identified

Students or staff displaying COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home and asked to check with their primary care physician. The Vermont Department of Health will notify the district if a student or staff member tests positive. We will cooperate with the Department of Health as they conduct the appropriate notifications of individuals who have been in contact with the person infected. BUUSD will use the advice of the Department of Health in order to make decisions around closing classrooms, sections of buildings or schools if needed. **If a household member tests positive for COVID-19, we are asking that all members of the household follow the same guidance and quarantine as well as it relates to school. This applies to in-person learning, extracurricular activities and work at school.**

Updated 2/15/21

GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF ON SOCIAL DISTANCING (including all contracted staff)

- Employees must follow the Governor's Orders on COVID-19 restrictions including but not limited to travel and multiple-household gatherings.
- Employees must follow social distancing requirements at all times including wearing a mask, staying six feet apart from adults and older students.
- Employees should be sure to sign in to classrooms or other spaces they are entering.
- Limit congregating with or entering the workspace of other staff members who are not assigned to your work/position.
- Limit the number of staff working with a student to those who are specifically assigned to that student.
- Employees should use specific assigned spaces for breaks and lunch periods.
- Employees must complete the daily affirmation web survey each day they enter the building.
 - Employees with even mild COVID-19 symptoms must not report to work.
 - Employees must be symptom free (without medication) for 24 hours prior to returning to work
- Employees who travel outside of the state of Vermont must follow the cross state travel guidance from the agency commerce and community development guidelines requiring quarantine. (<https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>)
- **Employees who were directed to test or receive a positive test, or told to quarantine should inform their building principals and school nurse, who will inform other direct supervisors.**

This does not apply to employees who participate in AOE COVID-19 Surveillance Testing administered at school.

- **If a household member has tested positive for COVID-19, we are asking that all members of the household follow the same guidance and quarantine as well as it relates to school. This applies to in-person learning, extracurricular activities and work at school.**