

Protocols for Antigen Testing each Monday

Background

As we approach our second fall and opening of school amid the Covid -19 virus, we as a community will need to find the balance of living with Covid -19 and maintaining rigorous academic schedule along with a rich extracurricular life without interruptions. The Covid Task Force Team has decided on a multidisciplinary approach that has a proven record of success, including weekly testing. We will assess our procedures throughout the school year and modify them based upon government regulations and risk assessments based upon school data.

Definitions

- Unvaccinated individuals: those individuals with no Covid 19 Vaccine or individuals with one vaccine.
- Fully Immunized Individuals: those individuals who are 14 days past their second Covid 19 Vaccine.

Procedures

The Nurses will utilize the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) to determine if someone has received the Covid Vaccine. If an individual's Covid Vaccine is not recorded on the MIIS system, they may bring their card to the Nurse's Office for verification.

Each Monday morning unvaccinated individuals and those students participating in extracurricular activities in our community will participate in antigen testing. While the PCR tests which are used for diagnosing are the Gold Standard for detecting the presence of the virus, the antigen tests can be quite useful in determining if an asymptomatic person is contagious. The antigen tests will be useful if someone feels fine but needs to make sure they are not a silent spreader. Antigen tests that report as negative have a 99% percent accuracy.

All unvaccinated individuals will be required to make an account online with Curative to participate in testing. Individuals will report to the gym entry **Door # 7** for testing beginning at 7 am each Monday morning.

Individuals will wait in the gym until the test results are available. Testing will be a self-swab of the nasal passages. If a person's test is negative, then they will be free to go about their daily schedule. If a test is positive the individual will be asked to obtain a PCR test to confirm the presence of the virus. Individuals will be quarantined until the test results are returned.

If an individual does not utilize the testing process provided by the school each Monday, they will be sent home until they provide a negative Antigen test result. That quarantine will include school and any after school activities including athletics. Refusal to test will mean student and parents will meet with Administration and Headmaster.

The evidenced-based scientific research is clear on the issue of the Delta variant. Unlike earlier variants of the coronavirus, the Delta variant has been shown to exist in the nose and upper throat of infected people and while the viral load drops off quickly in vaccinated individuals it is still a major source of contagion in the unvaccinated. The CDC masks guidance recommends everyone mask indoors. Other infectious disease experts such as Linsey Marr, professor at Virginia Tech and an expert in the

transmission of infectious diseases via aerosols are adamant about vaccinations being the first line of defense to protect our children.

Dr. Marr states “we need to get as many people vaccinated as possible, as kids under 12 cannot be vaccinated but if everyone around them is vaccinated, it will protect them too. Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the National Institute of Health, stated” anyone who tries to tell you don’t worry about the kids- that is not the evidence. With the Delta variant being so contagious, kids are very seriously at risk, and it is up to all of us to do everything we can to protect them.”

Questions or concerns may be addressed to the Nurse’s Office. Any other sources of information should be avoided as they may not have accurate information approved by the School.

Protocols for Covid exposure in classroom, on extracurricular team or athletic teams.

If a positive case of Covid 19 is reported to the Nurse’s Office, the Nurses will then ask for seating charts from teachers or rosters lists from coaches. The Nurse will assess who is vaccinated or unvaccinated when considering their exposure to the positive individual. Contact tracing will determine who is most at risk as being identified as a close contact.

Individuals identified as a close contact:

- Parents of a vaccinated individual will be notified by the Nurses in order that they monitor for signs and symptoms of Covid 19 and they will not be quarantined.
- Parents of unvaccinated students who were within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer will be considered close contacts. Those individuals determined to be close contacts will be subject to an 8 day quarantine with a PCR test on day 5 and if negative, they may return to school, sport or activity on day 8.