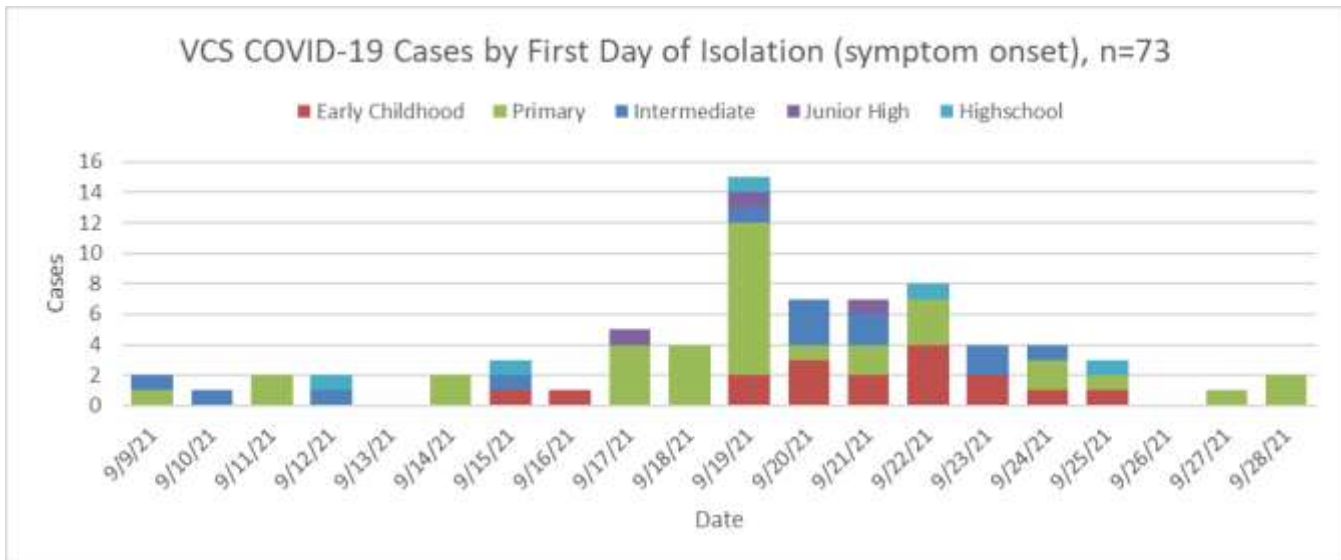
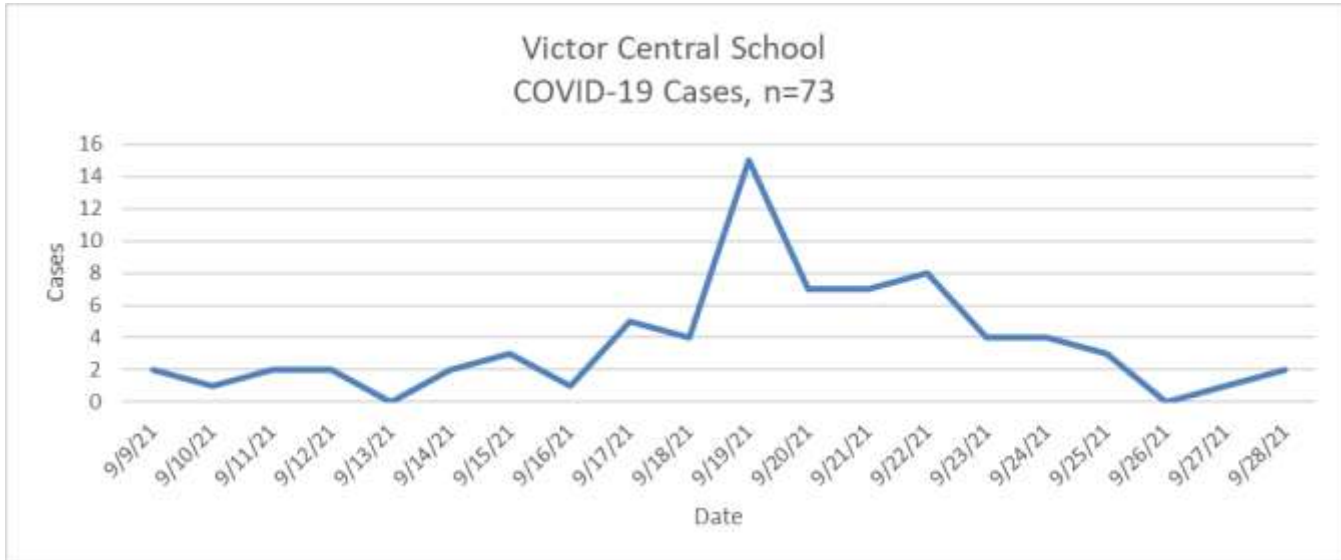




10/1/2021: Update on COVID-19 Outbreak in Victor Schools

Is the outbreak over?

There have been no newly reported cases, outside of those who were exposed and on quarantine, for 3 days. It appears the outbreak has subsided, and quarantine efforts were effective.



From 9/9/21- 9/28/2021, 73 VCS children and teachers were diagnosed with COVID-19 by positive lab test; 285 VCS children have been in or are currently in 10-day quarantines. To date, 13 children identified as contacts have tested positive for COVID-19. An additional 12, developed symptoms of COVID-19 but were not tested. These are considered probable cases. There may be more that were not reported to the health department. If these children had remained in school, COVID would have continued to spread.

10/1/2021

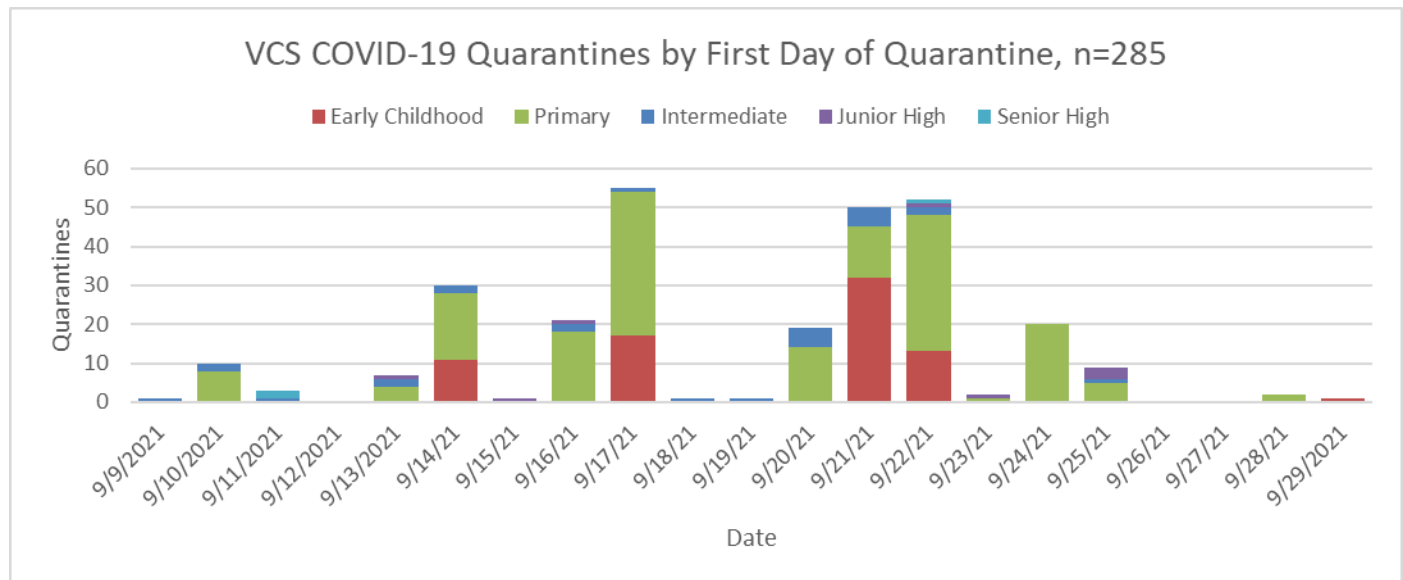


How many children were quarantined?

VCS Students Quarantined 9/9/2021-9/28/2021			
	# Students per cohort (data.nysed.gov)	# Quarantined (% school population) 9/9/21-9/28/21	#Not Quarantined (% school population) 9/9/21-9/28/21
Early Childhood	585	74 (13%)	511 (87%)
Primary	672	174 (26%)	498 (74%)
Intermediate	972	26 (3%)	946 (97%)
Junior High	653	8 (1%)	645 (99%)
Senior High	1390	3 (0.2%)	1387 (99.8%)
Total	4272	285 (7%)	3987 (93%)

During this outbreak, Ontario County Public Health focused on protecting children from illness while at the same time trying to keep most of them in school. Initially, quarantines were of those proximal to the case. When multiple cases were identified and contact tracing did not point to causes outside of the school day, more quarantines became necessary. These occurred after detailed discussions with teachers, school nurses, and administrators.

The health department takes no joy in keeping children home from school, but by quarantining the children at highest risk for exposure and keeping the case rate down, it saves the school from having to potentially consider closing a grade level or building. Also please note that quarantines are not automatic; each case is investigated individually and thoroughly. Action taken is based on these findings and the likely risk to other students.



Will VCS children be quarantined to this extent in the future?

It's impossible to say this won't be required if there's an outbreak in the future.



Ontario County Public Health recognizes the challenges quarantines pose and is aware that children infected with COVID-19 usually have mild to moderate illness. Unfortunately, a small proportion develop severe disease and require hospitalization. In rare instances, in the days/weeks after infection, some children develop multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C). This is a life-threatening condition that two Ontario County children experienced after their infections. Fortunately, they both survived. Unfortunately, 450 American children have died of their infections or subsequent MIS-C. Of VCS's 73 cases, none required hospitalization.

What are other schools seeing and doing?

Among other rural Finger Lakes Counties, there have been clusters in middle and high school students. The vaccine rate in Ontario County generally, and in Victor specifically, exceeds that of other communities. There have been very few cases of COVID-19 in VCS Junior and Senior High School buildings and no spread has been documented.

The Ontario County Public Health Director spoke with a Monroe County School Specialist this week and was told when there is an outbreak in a school or when there are multiple cases in a classroom of small children (PK-2), it is not unusual for them to quarantine an entire class. This practice is not unprecedented in Monroe and surrounding counties. Ontario County Public Health is following the same protocols/process as Monroe County per NYSDOH guidelines.

My child doesn't have classic COVID symptoms (cold symptoms), can I send them to school?

COVID-19 can cause a variety of symptoms and they are sometimes very mild and short lived. Some people have no symptoms at all. It is very common for small children to have nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea. These may be their first symptoms, or their only symptoms.

Symptoms of COVID-19:

- Cold and allergy-like symptoms
- Cough
- Fever
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Body aches

If your child experiences any of these symptoms do not send them to school. Get them tested for COVID-19.

When will children be able to be tested for COVID-19 at school?

Ontario County wants children in school and continues to work with your school district and surrounding districts to provide on-site COVID-19 testing. There will be two types of tests.

1. Pooled testing will be used for unvaccinated teachers and staff and, as time and supplies allow children whose parents would like them screened for COVID-19. This test is for people without symptoms and will be done with a sample obtained with a q-tip from the



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inside of the cheek. There is no discomfort in obtaining these samples. Each sample will be labeled with the individual's name. When the samples arrive at the lab, a little bit from each will be transferred into a common "pool" and will be tested together. If the pooled sample is positive for COVID-19, each person's sample will then be tested separately. An additional sample will not be needed. Results will take 24-48 hours.

2. Diagnostic testing using a table-top pcr unit will also be available, with parental permission, for sick children who visit the nurse. This test will be done with a nasal sample (a q-tip inside the nose for a few seconds, each nostril)—not the unpleasant, long, thin swab/brush used earlier in the pandemic. Parents of children on quarantine may consent to have their child tested at school by this method if they wish them to be able to remain in school after having been exposed to COVID-19. A negative test will allow a child to attend school and not be quarantined if exposed to a positive case. The child will be tested daily for several days.

More details about testing will be available in the next 1-2 weeks. Ontario County Public Health will be training staff and pushing materials out to schools next week!

This has been a challenging outbreak for everyone. We are working closely with all Ontario County schools to support in-person learning. We understand that the Pfizer vaccine will soon be available to younger children. Please discuss this with your children's health care provider and consider this vaccine when available.

Mary Beer RN MPH
Public Health Director
Ontario County