

# **The Meadowbrook School Protocols for COVID-19 Case and Close Contacts**

## **Academic Year September 2021- June 2022**

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, has been shown to be highly contagious. This document outlines protocols to help mitigate spread among students and faculty at Meadowbrook. These protocols are based on the most current guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to respond to COVID-19 cases in the school setting and any close contacts. These protocols will continue to be updated as guidance is updated and based on state and local health metrics.

### **Students participating in P.E. or middle school athletics after a positive COVID-19 diagnosis:**

1. Any student who has tested positive for COVID-19 must call their pediatrician's office for a pre-participation screen after COVID-19 for organized sports or physical education class.
2. The earliest this pre-participation clearance can be done is 14 days after being symptom free or 14 days after testing positive if asymptomatic. See the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines.

## **Section 1: COVID-19 symptoms and definition of a close contact**

### **COVID-19 symptoms**

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and faculty should monitor themselves:

#### COVID-19 symptoms list:

- **Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills** (CDC has lowered the temperature from 100.4 to 100.0)
- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Sore throat
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Headache, *when in combination with other symptoms*

- Fatigue, *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

If faculty or students have any of these symptoms, they must call Meadowbrook Health Dept at 781-314-9240 for further instructions.

We ask that community members please stay home if they have any of the above symptoms.

Those with the above symptoms in bold will be required to be tested with a PCR test, regardless of vaccination status. Individuals with a mild symptom may be considered for testing using BinaxNOW. Mild symptom refers to any single (isolated) symptom from the following list: cough, sore throat, nausea/ vomiting/ diarrhea, headache, fatigue, nasal congestion/ runny nose (not due to other known causes). If a symptom is severe, even if isolated, it would not be considered a mild symptom. Students with severe symptoms or multiple symptoms may need to be evaluated by their physician.

In the event of a symptomatic person in school:

- Evaluated by school health team
- Symptoms are deemed consistent with COVID-19 based on best practices
- Individuals will remain masked and be placed in a separate room with the door closed when feasible. If a separate room is not available, they must adhere to a strict 6 feet of physical distance until they can go home.
- Individuals will be tested as stated above depending on symptoms and sent home.
- Individuals with very mild symptoms who test negative on a BinaxNOW test can remain in school.

## **Close Contacts/COVID-19 Exposure**

Close contacts include any individuals who have been within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual while indoors, for at least a cumulative total of 15 minutes during a 24-hour period. At risk exposure time begins 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or time of positive test if asymptomatic) and continues until the time the COVID-19 positive individual is isolated.

An individual who has been previously diagnosed with COVID-19 and then becomes a close contact of someone with COVID-19 is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols if the exposure occurred within 90 days of the onset of their own illness and the exposed individual is recovered and remain without COVID-19 symptoms

Close contacts who were exposed to a COVID-19 positive person outdoors at any time do not need to quarantine unless they become symptomatic.

## **Section 2: Recommended testing and quarantine response protocols**

### **Protocol A: For individuals who test positive**

If COVID-19 test is positive:

1. Remain at home in self- isolation for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset, or after a positive COVID-19 test if asymptomatic.
2. Monitor symptoms
3. Notify the school of positive test result
4. Answer any calls from the local Department of Public Health or MA Community Tracing collaborative to help identify close contacts to help prevent transmission
5. Return to school after 10 days (on day 11) if they have been without fever for 24 hours (without taking fever reducing medications) and experienced improvement in other symptoms.

Individuals who do not meet these criteria should receive clearance from the local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative, or school health professional before returning to school.

### **Protocol B: For asymptomatic close contacts**

If identified as a close contact but not experiencing symptoms:

School- based close contacts will have the option to participate in Test and Stay protocol to minimize the amount of time individuals are out of school.

Non- school based close contacts, or those who are identified as close contacts of an individual outside of school will not participate in the Test and Stay program and will be required to quarantine (see Protocol B-2 or B-3).

Individuals who are part of the Test and Stay protocols may be eligible to participate in school sports and extracurricular activities, provided that they are in compliance with the applicable protocol. For events and sports that take place on non-school days, testing will still be required on those days to participate.

As part of Test and Stay, quarantine is still strongly recommended for individuals outside of school settings.

Those who may participate in Test and Stay at Meadowbrook include:

- unvaccinated close contacts** with a school- based close contact
- asymptomatic, fully vaccinated close contacts**, whether their close contacts was in school or out of school.
- bus close contacts (those within 6 feet of a positive case for 15 minutes or greater) as long as the windows were open and all individuals on the bus were masked.

### **Protocol B-1: Test and Stay**

Close contacts can remain in school and do not have to quarantine, as long as they:

- are asymptomatic
- wear a mask while at school at all times (including outdoors and during athletics), other than eating or drinking.
- Take a rapid antigen test (BinaxNOW) on each school day and receive a negative result. When the 7 days from date of exposure includes weekends or holidays, individuals should quarantine on weekends, and if they remain asymptomatic, upon return to school be tested immediately. If the individual remains negative, they can stay in school.
- Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14, and self-isolate at home if symptoms develop.
- The test and stay program will not include field trips.

\*Note: If an individual has symptoms or develops symptoms during the Test and Stay period or the 14 days following initial exposure, they should follow the protocol for symptomatic individuals (Protocol C). If an individual tests positive at any time, they should follow the protocol for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 (Protocol A).

### **Protocol B-2: Traditional protocol (if family or adult individual chooses not to participate in Test and Stay)**

1. Those who choose not to participate in Test and Stay must quarantine at least 7 days from the date of exposure.
  2. Return to school after 7 days, returning on day 8, provided that they:
    - Remain asymptomatic
    - Receive a COVID test (PCR or rapid antigen) on day 5 or later and receive a negative result.
    - Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14, and self-isolate if symptoms develop.
- \*Note: If an individual has symptoms at the time they are designated a close contact or within the 14 days following initial exposure, they follow the protocol for symptomatic individuals (Protocol C). If an individual tests positive at any time, they follow the protocol for individuals who test positive (Protocol A).

### **Protocol B-3: Alternate protocol for those who choose not to receive a COVID test**

1. Those who choose not to receive a COVID test must quarantine at least 10 days from the date of exposure.
2. Return to school after 10 days, returning on day 11 provided that they:
  - have not experienced symptoms up to this point

-Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14 and self isolate if symptoms develop.

\*Note: If an individual has symptoms at the time they are designated a close contact or within the 14 days following initial exposure, they follow the protocol for symptomatic individuals (protocol C). If an individual tests positive at any time, they follow the protocol for individuals who test positive (Protocol A).

## **Protocol C: For symptomatic individuals**

\_\_\_\_\_ Vaccinated and unvaccinated students who experience COVID-19 symptoms.

### **Protocol C-1: Return to school post-symptoms with test**

1. Individuals may return to school after they:
    - Have received a negative COVID-19 test as outlined in Section 1.  
Note: So long as an individual is not a close contact, if a medical professional makes an alternative diagnosis for the COVID-19 like symptoms, the individual may use this recommendation (e.g., for influenza or strep pharyngitis) in lieu of a COVID-19 test.
    - Have improvement in symptoms
    - Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- \*Note: If the symptomatic individual was a close contact, they should follow Protocol B-1 for Test and Stay after symptoms resolve and they receive a negative COVID-19 test. If they opt not to participate in Test and Stay, they should follow Protocol B-2 or B-3.

### **Protocol C-2: Alternative protocol for symptomatic individuals who are not close contacts and choose not to receive a COVID test to return to school**

1. Individuals must isolate at least 10 days from symptom onset.
2. Return to school after 10 days, returning on day 11, assuming they:
  - Have improvement in symptoms
  - Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

