



January 18, 2022

Dear Parents or Guardians:

In response to rising community infection rates and updated CDC guidance, this letter is to notify you that our schools have revised some of our policies, which will take effect immediately. The full Addendum will be posted on our website at <https://www.excellencecommunityschools.org/bronx-1/covid19resources>, but the following provides a summary of those changes.

Vaccines: In accordance with [CDC recommendations](#), Bronx Excellence strongly endorses all eligible individuals to protect themselves by getting fully vaccinated. Current COVID-19 vaccines were designed to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death and remain highly effective tools in our protection against the virus. Scholars ages 5-17 who are fully vaccinated or have recovered from a confirmed case within the past 90 days will not have to quarantine if identified as a close contact of a positive case. However, vaccinated children will need to get tested five days after exposure.

Masks: Bronx Excellence will continue to require all students and staff to wear face masks, regardless of vaccination status. However, because the highly contagious Delta and Omicron variants are circulating, health experts are recommending mask upgrades. The best use of a face covering is to ensure it fits snugly against the sides of your face, fully covers your nose and mouth, and can be secured under your chin. The most effective masks that offer this level of protection are N95 and KN95 masks. Our schools will begin transitioning all staff and students to wearing N95, KN95, or similar-grade masks while in our school buildings. As we prepare for this shift, we recognize the need to purchase sufficient inventory both at home and at the school. During this transition, students who arrive to school with a cloth mask (or no mask) will be provided with a procedure mask to wear underneath the cloth mask (or by itself) for the remainder of the day. Once sufficient supply is available, if a student or staff member arrives to school wearing a loose-fitting or cloth mask or no mask at all, a disposable replacement N95 or KN95 mask will be provided for use.

Daily Screenings: Bronx Excellence will continue to require families and staff to conduct daily morning screenings for symptoms or risk factors prior to arriving to the schools. Please do not bring your child to school if s/he is exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills (100°F or greater)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting; and/or
- Diarrhea

Isolation: The CDC now recommends shorter isolation periods. Regardless of vaccination status, all individuals who test positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus must stay home and isolate for at least five days (Day 0 is the day symptoms start or, if asymptomatic, the day the test sample is taken). After five days, individuals may leave isolation if they do not have a fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptom are improving. For the next five days, recovering individuals must wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public, continue to monitor for symptoms, and take additional precautions (for example, physical distancing).



Quarantine: The CDC also recommends shorter quarantine periods for individuals identified as close contacts (within six feet of a confirmed positive case for 15 or more cumulative minutes within a 24-hour period). Close contacts must quarantine for at least five days from exposure (Day 0 is the day of exposure). On or after the fifth day of quarantine, close contacts should get tested **by a licensed care provider or facility. Please note that home tests will not be accepted as proof of a negative test.** If they remain asymptomatic after 5 days of quarantine and do not test positive, they will be permitted to return to school as long as they continue to wear a well-fitting N95/KN95 mask and take additional precautions for an additional 5 days. Proof of a negative test from a testing facility must be emailed to the principal prior to school return. **NOTE: Negative home tests will not be accepted.**

Individuals identified as close contacts who meet the following criteria **do not** need to quarantine as long as they remain well and without symptoms:

- Staff who are fully vaccinated and boosted
- Scholars who are 5-17 years old and fully vaccinated (2 weeks after series)**
- Any individual who has had a confirmed case within the past 90 days

Home Tests: The schools have received a shipment of home test kits. When a positive case is identified, close contacts will receive a home test with instructions for administration *while supplies last*. This is for your peace of mind. Students and staff will still need to quarantine for the full duration described above regardless of a negative test result. If a home test indicates a positive result, individuals should contact their healthcare provider for further guidance, particularly if symptoms develop. Please notify the school immediately if your child tests positive so we can enact tracing protocols accordingly. Again, please note that home tests will not be accepted as proof of a negative test prior to returning from quarantine.

	If you test positive	If you are a close contact
Scholars	Regardless of vaccination status: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolate for at least 5 days • Return after Day 5 if no fever for 24 or more hours and symptom improvement • Mask for Days 6-10 • Take additional precautions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarantine for at least 5 days • Test on/after Day 5 after exposure • Return if negative test and no symptoms • Mask for Days 6-10 • Take additional precautions <p>**Scholars who are fully vaccinated or have recently recovered (within the past 90 days) from a confirmed COVID-19 case do not have to quarantine as long as they remain well. However, fully vaccinated scholars must get tested on/after the fifth day after exposure. Monitor for symptoms.</p>

Bronx Excellence will continue to adhere to additional strategies, which include Ventilation; Physical Distancing and Classroom Cohorting; Hand Hygiene; Seating Charts; and Cleaning Protocols. To learn more about our mitigation strategies, please visit our website at <https://www.excellencecommunityschools.org/bronx-1/covid19resources>.

Thank you and stay safe.

Sincerely,
Dr. Charlene Reid, CEO