

FAQs About COVID-19 & School

What are the protocols for combating COVID-19 this school year?

Video overview of DESE [COVID Guidelines FALL 2021](#) (4:43 minutes)

What additional mitigation measures is SPS following?

SPS is proactively instituting mitigation measures some of which include: masking wearing expectations for all students and staff; 3' of distancing where feasible; 6' of distancing while inside and without masks when feasible

Lab grade filters

When should I keep my child home from school?

[Symptom Checklist](#)

When can my child return to school?

[Return to School Guidelines](#)

[Flow Chart:](#)

Where can I get a Covid-19 PCR test done?

[Find a COVID-19 Test](#)

If my child is tested for COVID-19 outside of school, can they attend school while awaiting results?

No. While you are waiting for COVID-19 test results, your child should quarantine at home. Once you receive the results, please send them to your school nurse.

Can my child go to school if another family member is sick at home?

If a family member is ill but has not been identified as COVID-19 positive, children who are asymptomatic may attend school. *If the ill family member receives a positive test result, then unvaccinated children must quarantine at home and be tested. Children who have completed their vaccination series are allowed to come to school as long as they are asymptomatic.*

How will I know if my child is a close contact with someone who is confirmed to have COVID-19?

If you have been identified as a close contact of a positive **school case**, you will be contacted by the school nurse. If you are not contacted, you have not been identified as a close contact and do not need to test or quarantine. The school nurse will work in conjunction with the local Board of Health (LBOH) nurse or contact tracer. You will receive a call from the LBOH nurse or contact tracer who will follow your progress during your child's quarantine period.

What is quarantine?

Quarantine is used to keep someone *who might have been exposed to COVID-19* away from others. Quarantine helps prevent the spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, and monitor their health for 10

days. Quarantine options for unvaccinated individuals is now 5 days, with continued monitoring through day 10. There is no testing requirement. Vaccinated individuals are not required to quarantine after an exposure to a positive case.

What is the Test and Stay Program?

SPS will be participating in a brand new state program this school year, "Test and Stay". The Test and Stay program is a testing initiative intended for asymptomatic close contacts of individuals with confirmed COVID-19 **who are in the school setting**. This testing program will allow asymptomatic close contacts to remain in school if they receive an individual rapid antigen test (BinaxNOW) each school day and test negative. The testing will take place at school, in the nursing office. With the addition of Test and Stay, we hope to support keeping as many students and staff in school as possible, safely. **This program is intended only for school-related exposure to COVID.**

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.

**note: Individuals who are fully vaccinated and asymptomatic are exempt from testing and quarantine protocols when identified as close contacts. Therefore, the majority of those using Test and Stay are the unvaccinated.*

[Detailed State Guidelines for Testing and Going Home](#)

Do the siblings of a close contact need to stay home while their COVID tests are pending?

No. Siblings are just contacts of a contact. So as long as the unvaccinated sibling in quarantine does not develop any symptoms of illness or test positive, then the non-quarantining siblings may continue to attend school.

- The unvaccinated siblings should separate from the quarantining individual during this time to reduce their chances of exposure should the quarantining child become ill themselves.
- If the close contact does get a positive test result or develop symptoms, then the unvaccinated siblings would be considered close contacts and would need to get tested AND quarantine according to the above 5 day guidelines.

What do I do if my child tests positive for COVID-19?

If your child tests positive, they must be isolated from the rest of the family for 5 days. Please notify your school nurse immediately so contact tracing can begin. You will be contacted by the Sudbury Board of Health or a contact tracer for further investigation but there may be a delay in when they receive the test results. Notifying the school nurses will save valuable time and reduce further disease transmission.

What is isolation?

Isolation is used to keep someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 away from others. Isolation helps prevent the spread of illness while a person is infected with the illness. During isolation, the COVID-positive person should stay home, completely separate themselves from others, and monitor their symptoms for 10 days.

Is it okay to travel? There is no travel advisory at this time.

What if my student is vaccinated and has symptoms of illness?

If your child has the following symptoms:

- Fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, chills, or shaking chills)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle aches or body aches

To return to school they should::

1. Receive a negative PCR or antigen test or have an alternate diagnosis from a medical provider.
2. Symptoms improve
3. Be fever-free without fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours

*The FAQs should also include symptoms to be tested for if your child is vaccinated.(fever, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, new loss of taste or smell, muscle or body aches). It's different than for the unvaccinated.