

# BLIND BROOK-RYE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**COLIN BYRNE, D.P.S.**  
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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## **Update on COVID Protocols and Testing**

Dear Members of the Blind Brook Community,

Over the last week we have seen many changes on the COVID front. Letters from both the New York State and Westchester County Departments of Health have adjusted many aspects of the protocols that had been established in our district. With the onboarding of a new COVID Coordinator we have also taken the time to review and modify some of the practices that have been in place. As all of these changes can be confusing, I am writing this to summarize some of the main items. This information will also be available on the School Opening web page in the Resources section of the District website.

Please know that there are still some areas of uncertainty that I and other superintendents in the area are attempting to get clarity on. I will continue to update you as new information is released.

## **Quarantines and Isolations**

In the email that I sent last Tuesday I shared with everyone that the Westchester County Department of Health had officially adopted the reduced 5-day quarantine and isolation times for those who had COVID or were unvaccinated and exposed to someone who was positive for COVID. There are a few important caveats to this time reduction that are important to understand.

- Quarantine and/or isolation times start the day after the individual tests positive for COVID or has their first symptom. The day of testing or first symptom is not counted as day 1 of quarantine.
- In order to end an isolation when someone is positive for COVID, the individual must be asymptomatic or have symptoms resolved after the fifth day. If symptoms persist, the individual will have to continue to isolate.
- Individuals who return to school after day 5 of their quarantine/isolation period must wear a well fitting mask around others until day 10. We have received clarification that students and staff in this situation can remove their mask to eat (as long as they are appropriately distanced) but must wear a mask during all other times while in school.

## **Athletics/Extracurricular Activities**

The initial guidance that school districts received stated that students who were exposed to someone with COVID must be fully vaccinated and boosted in order to take part in athletics and after-school activities. Since this has not been officially adopted by the Westchester County Department of Health we are waiting for clarification as to what the requirements are in this matter.

There has also been a recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics as well as Section One Athletics that students get cardiac clearance from their health care provider in order to return to playing a sport after having COVID. We are reviewing this at this time. While we understand that getting a doctor's appointment can be difficult, we also want to make sure that we are doing everything that needs to be done to ensure our athlete's health. More on this to come in the near future.

### **Face Masks**

The CDC recommends the use of surgical or N95/KN95 masks in place of cloth masks which may not provide as much protection. While there is currently no requirement to move away from cloth masks, I want you to know that the District does have a supply of child- and adult-size surgical masks that students and staff can access if needed.

### **Communications**

During the transition between COVID Coordinators the email notification that was sent when exposures were identified was temporarily suspended. Instead of reinstating this practice we will now refer everyone to the [New York State COVID 19 Report Card](#) website. The District reports the number of positive cases as well as individuals tested on campus on a daily basis. This site reflects the most up to date information and is readily accessible at any time. This link will be placed on the District website as well.

As COVID continues to be part of our lives the District will do what it can to provide a safe learning environment for our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Colin M. Byrne  
Interim Superintendent of School