

Updated COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation protocols

Jan 9 2022

January 10, 2022

Dear East Ramapo Central School District Community,

School executives from each Rockland County school district and Rockland BOCES met with officials from the Rockland County Department of Health (RCDOH) to review and discuss a variety of urgent COVID-19-related matters, including updated quarantine and isolation protocols, contact tracing requirements and the "test to stay" mitigation strategy being used in neighboring counties.

Starting on Monday, January 10, 2022, any student or employee who **tests positive for COVID-19**, regardless of vaccination status, will be permitted to return to school/work after **five days** - depending on the date of symptom onset or date of positive COVID-19 test.

Students and employees must meet the following criteria to return to school following a five-day isolation due to being **COVID-19 positive**:

- No fever for at least 24 hours, unmedicated
- Resolution or reduction of symptoms
- Students and employees must wear an appropriate face-covering indoors and outdoors - at all times

This new protocol for positive cases does not apply to immunocompromised students and staff members.

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Implementing this isolation reduction from ten days to five days will allow students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, to return to our schools more quickly after testing positive for COVID-19.

With regard to the "test to stay" approach, which would allow exposed students and staff to remain in school if they have a negative COVID test, RCDOH has placed several complex requirements that could make it difficult to implement with fidelity across our school community. As a result, we have chosen not to implement that approach at this time. Barriers include a county mandate that testing be performed by licensed healthcare professionals – in schools – prior to the start of each school day, for all students and staff. Additionally, county health officials are prohibiting at-home testing to be included in a "test to stay" program citing an inability to guarantee accuracy of test results. Although we are not adopting it at this time, we will continue to review and assess the RCDOH "test to stay" mandates as we consider the viability of adopting this strategy.

Additional Changes to COVID-19 Quarantine Protocols as per RCDOH

- Individuals with up-to-date COVID-19 vaccinations, **exposed to someone with COVID-19** will not be required to quarantine.
 - If those exposed individuals begin to experience COVID-19 symptoms, they must quarantine and seek COVID-19 testing. If testing is negative, the quarantine will end. However, if testing is not conducted or is positive the individual must isolate.
- Individuals not completely vaccinated, **exposed to someone with COVID-19**, must quarantine for 5 days.
- Students who are within 3-6 feet of an infected student where both students were consistently wearing well-fitting masks are not considered exposed.

We would like to express our gratitude for the hard work and dedication of our East Ramapo nurses, administrators, staff and families, for going above and beyond to ensure the safety of our staff and students. The COVID-19 surge is impacting entire communities in various ways, but we will persevere by continuing to work together. Thank you for your ongoing flexibility and support as we work each day to provide a healthy, safe, supportive, challenging and engaging learning environment.

[Skip To Main Content](#)



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Sincerely,

Dr. Clarence G. Ellis
Superintendent of Schools

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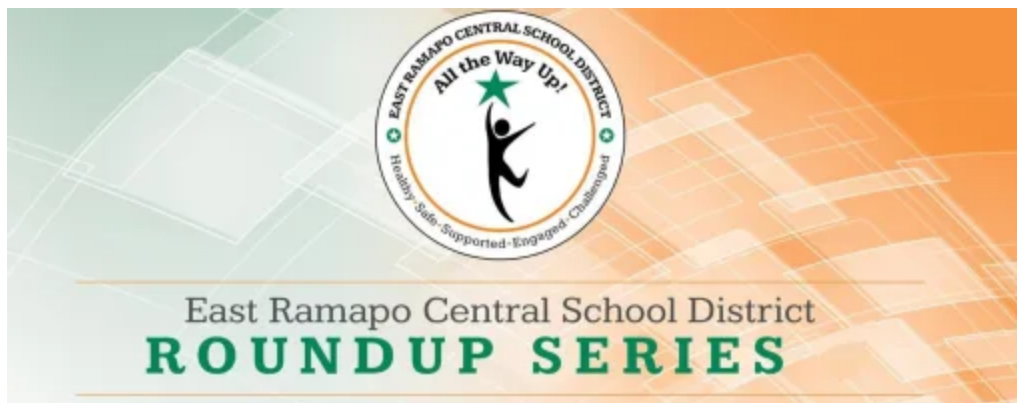
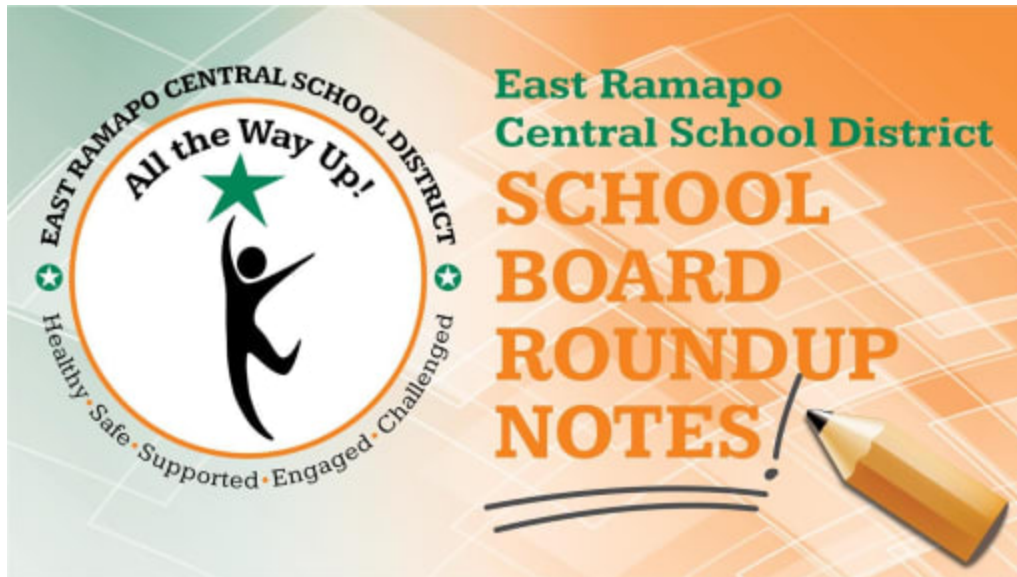
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