As we move into the 2nd quarter of our school year, efforts to prevent/control the spread of COVID-19 continue. Vaccine availability for our students has helped us remain as safe as possible in an in-school, in-person, five days a week educational environment. However, the virus still remains a threat, and the ongoing health and safety of K-12 students and staff remains paramount.

The following health and safety protocols reflect recent guidance from the Ohio Department of Health. This recent guidance is called Mask to Stay/Test to Play and applies ONLY to in-school exposure to COVID-19. Quarantine guidelines for out-of-school exposure to COVID-19 remain the same.

Until the COVID-19 pandemic ends (or more likely becomes endemic), Yellow Springs Schools will continue to deploy all layered levels of protection as recommended by the CDC to the greatest extent possible.

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People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection. A person is considered fully vaccinated two weeks following the final dose in a two-dose vaccine or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine.

Yellow Springs Schools has a high percentage of vaccinated teachers and staff (currently at 95%). Our current vaccination percentage for eligible students aged 12-17, with a 45387 address, is 87%. Yellow Springs Schools will continue to partner with Greene County Public Health to promote and offer vaccinations for all eligible children and adults.

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. The disease can spread rapidly among individuals who are not fully vaccinated and result in serious illness or death. Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.

Achieving high levels of COVID-19 vaccination among eligible students, teachers, staff, and household members is one of the most critical strategies to help schools safely conduct in-person learning and allow safe participation in extracurricular activities and sports.
In general mask use is not necessary when outdoors, including when participating in outdoor play, recess, and physical education activities. However, in areas of substantial to high transmission of COVID-19 and the Delta variant, it is recommended that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve close contact with other unvaccinated individuals.

Yellow Springs Schools has a universal mask requirement for all adults and students regardless of vaccination status for the 2021-2022 school year. Students should bring their own mask every day. The mask requirement will continue until health guidance regarding masks changes.
Monitor Daily Health

It is essential that all staff and students perform daily health checks at home prior to coming to school. Parents and family members it is critical for you to monitor your children for possible symptoms of COVID-19. Anyone in Yellow Springs Schools with symptoms or a temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit should stay home. Yellow Springs Schools will monitor daily absences of students and staff for possible trends. Testing is recommended for individuals who exhibit symptoms. Please check the flowchart for quarantines to determine when testing is required.

You may have COVID-19 if you experience one or more of the following:

- Fever or chills.
- Cough.
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- Fatigue.
- Muscle or body aches.
- Headache.
- Loss of taste or smell.
- Sore throat.
- Congestion or runny nose.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Diarrhea.
- Repeated shaking with chills.
COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that is highly transmissible by air. Improving ventilation is a critical intervention that can help slow the spread of the virus.

In summer 2020, Yellow Springs Schools purchased a Medify AirX M25 air filtration unit for every classroom, learning space, cafeteria, and office. Each unit covers 500 square feet. Larger spaces have multiple units. Filters for these units are changed regularly per manufacturer's guidelines.

Staff members are encouraged to keep windows and doors open when safe and possible to maximize ventilation. Staff and students are encouraged to have class and lunch outside when possible.

The district will use EPA sanitizers and cleaners effective against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), and appropriate cleaning supplies will continue to be available in every classroom.

Cleaning and sanitization of high-touch areas (tables, door handles, etc.) will occur frequently.

Restroom facilities will be cleaned approximately every two hours during the school day. Touchless paper towel dispensers are available in every restroom.

Water fountains will not be available for use during the 2021-2022 school year. The district has installed, where possible, water bottle fillers for student use. Students should bring a refillable water bottle every day.

Ensuring Ohio students have access to in-person learning remains a priority, and schools in which not everyone is fully vaccinated should implement physical distancing to the extent possible. This should not hinder student participation in in-person learning.

The CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students. When this is not possible, layered mitigation techniques such as indoor masking, improved ventilation, regular cleaning, frequent hand washing, attention to symptoms and illness, and testing play a huge part in preventing the spread of the disease.

During lunch, physical distance should be maximized to the extent possible in the food service line and eating areas.
Music & Extracurriculars

- Music classes and school-sponsored extracurricular activities can help students learn and achieve, and support social, emotional, and mental health. Due to increased exhalation that occurs during singing or playing of musical instruments, there may be greater risk of exposure to those students who are not fully vaccinated.
- Yellow Springs Schools has purchased special masks for students to use when singing and playing a musical instrument. These will be used as part of the regular coursework. As often as practicable, classes will occur outdoors.
- Elementary music classes will sing on a limited basis.
- Students should refrain from these activities when they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should be tested.
- The district's universal mask policy applies to all school-sponsored extra-curricular activities.

Athletics

- All Yellow Springs Schools athletes will comply with the universal mask-policy when not on the playing field.
- Coaches will remain masked indoors, and outdoors when face-to-face with student athletes, as able and practicable.
- Student-athletes should refrain from these activities when they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should be tested.
- The use of social distancing to the extent possible is recommended during indoor sports.

ODH's Test to Play Guidelines apply in cases of classroom exposure.

From COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools (Updated July 2021)

Click here to read the full report
Guidelines for Quarantine After Exposure in K-12 Classroom Settings

2021-2022
Revised November 2021

Yellow Springs Schools

Mask to Stay/Test to Play Option

Quarantining students at home who have been exposed to COVID-19 in a school environment has the unintended consequence of reducing in-school learning and can be an added strain on parents, schools, and local health departments (LHDs). While vaccination and mask usage are critical components to ensuring a safe school environment, we offer an in-school alternative to quarantining students and staff at home who have been exposed to COVID-19 in a school environment to support in-school learning and reduce the strain.

This recommendation is informed by a growing body of national experience, a pilot in Warren County, and experience shared by other LHDs that points toward a low number of individuals with direct contact to a COVID-19 positive individual within a school setting who convert to positive cases. Based on this information and the success of the Warren County pilot, we recommend the following for K-12 students and staff exposed to COVID-19 in a school setting.

Please note: Eligibility to participate in mask to stay/test to play is contingent on the exposure being in the school setting or school-related activities. This does not apply to household exposures or exposures outside of the school setting or school-related activities.

Mask to Stay

Direct contacts, regardless of vaccination or masking status, may remain in the classroom environment if they do the following:

- Wear a mask for 14 days after their last date of exposure.
- Self-monitor, or parent-monitor, for symptoms of COVID-19.
- Isolate and get tested if they start to experience symptoms associated with COVID-19 (regardless of level of severity).
- Consistent with guidance for others quarantining in lower-risk environments, students and staff may discontinue these quarantine procedures after seven days — if they don’t develop symptoms and test negative between days 5-7.

Direct contacts for COVID-19 are those individuals who are identified as being directly exposed to COVID-19 by the positive case. Remember, COVID-19 is a respiratory virus and does not require physical contact to spread. It is spread through sneezing, coughing, talking, and breathing. These factors should be considered when determining level of exposure and direct contacts. Best practice for distancing is 3 ft with everyone masked. 6 ft if the individual is not masked.

Parents and students are responsible for symptom monitoring; however, if nurses/school staff see a child exhibiting symptoms they should act accordingly.

Test to Play

Asymptomatic contacts may continue to participate in extracurricular activities if they do the following:

- Wear a mask when able. (This includes: transportation; locker rooms; sitting/standing on the sidelines; and anytime the mask will not interfere with breathing, the activity, or create a safety hazard.)
- Test on initial notification of exposure to COVID-19.
- Test again on days 5-7. If they are negative at this time, they will test out of quarantine.

Please Note: The tests referenced above are SARS-CoV-2 viral (PCR or antigen) tests. They should be proctored/observed by someone and cannot be an over the counter, at-home test that was self-administered without a proctor.

Districts should consider same day testing for athletic competitions where there is the potential of school-to-school exposure. If students involved in competitions become positive for COVID-19, contact tracing with other team does not need to occur; instead, send a general letter to notify the other team of the potential exposure.

These proposed changes incorporate mask wearing and testing to reduce the chance of spread of COVID-19 within structured school settings and provides a safe alternative to quarantine.
GUIDELINES FOR QUARANTINE AFTER EXPOSURE

This flow chart can help guide quarantine decisions after a person is exposed to someone with COVID-19.*

Did you have contact with a COVID-19 case?

Is the contact fully vaccinated?

Y

N

Did contact and case share food, drink, or eating utensils?

N

Y

Was contact within 6 feet from case?

N

Y

Not a contact

Were both parties involved in strenuous activity (i.e. exercising, sports)?

N

Y

Were both parties together for 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period?

N

Y

Not a contact

Contacts are required to:

- Quarantine at home for 10 days from last exposure date.
- Monitor for symptoms for 14 days.
- If symptoms develop, isolate at home for at least 10 days from symptom onset date.

Not a contact, however exposed person is recommended to:

- Wear a mask indoors, as much as possible. either for 14 days or until 7 days, if they receive a negative viral (PCR or antigen) test performed at least 3 days after exposure.
- If symptoms develop, exposed person must isolate at home for at least 10 days from symptom onset date.
QUESTIONS?

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