

January 27, 2022

Dear Forest Hills Families,

On Wednesday, January 26, 2022, Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA, Director, Ohio Department of Health released updated guidance regarding Contact Tracing and Case Investigation. In his statement Dr. Vanderhoff shared “As COVID-19 has evolved, public health mitigation strategies have been adjusted periodically to address new challenges. The quick spread of the Omicron variant and its rapid clinical course have made universal contact tracing, case investigation, and exposure notification impractical when combined with newly reduced timelines for quarantine and isolation.” His statement included the following information for schools.

“Effective immediately, schools may discontinue universal contact tracing but are expected to assist Local Health Departments (LHDs) with contact tracing, case investigation, and exposure notification related to outbreaks or clusters in schools as determined by the LHD. K-12 schools should continue to follow ODH’s protocol, “Mask to Stay, Test to Play,” and allow asymptomatic students to attend school while wearing a mask if they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. The best place for kids is in school, in-person, full-time.”

What does this information mean for your student and what information will you receive from the schools?

Masking on school transportation:

- At this time the nation is still under a federal mask mandate for public transportation, including school transportation.
- ALL students **must** wear a mask when utilizing school transportation until further notice.

Communication:

- Your student’s principal will communicate daily via email, the grade level of any positive case reported to the school. Individualized calls or letters to families will no longer occur.
- When a parent contacts the school about a positive student they will be instructed, as in the past of the isolation requirements and the return date for their student.

What if my student tests positive for COVID-19?

- Your student will be required to stay home for the next five (5) days regardless of symptoms or vaccination status.
- If the student has no fever and significant symptom improvement they may return to school on day six (6) and are required to wear a mask through day ten (10).

What if my student has had direct exposure to someone with COVID-19

- There has been an update to the “Mask to Stay, Test to Play,” procedures. As you may be aware the option to follow the “Mask to Stay, Test to Play,” protocols were limited to school-based exposures ONLY. Students who had been exposed to a positive contact outside of the school setting were required to quarantine for five (5) days from their last exposure, then were permitted to return to school masked for an additional five days.
- As of January 26, 2022, students who have been in direct contact with a positive case (inside or outside of the school setting) but remain asymptomatic may return to school with a mask following the “Mask to Stay, Test to Play,” protocols provided below.

Mask to Stay, Test to Play

- 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 10 days after their last date of exposure.
 - If a COVID-19 exposure occurs in the household and the student cannot isolate, the student must mask during the household member’s isolation period and for 10 days following that household member’s isolation.
 - 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 the level of severity).
- Test to Play
 - Asymptomatic contacts may continue to participate in extracurricular activities if they adhere to 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.
 - Testing on day 5 after exposure is recommended.

As has been the case during the entire pandemic, FHSD will continue to work in coordination with the Ohio Department of Health and the Hamilton County Public Health Department to make all necessary adjustments to ensure safe learning environments exist for all students, staff, and families.

Respectfully,



Scot Prebles
Superintendent