

# Lancaster County School District COVID Guidance

DHEC guidance is intended for K-12 schools to plan their response to known and possible cases of COVID-19 as well as known contacts. This is based on what is currently known about COVID-19.

## **Prevention Strategies to Reduce Transmission of COVID-19 in Schools**

These COVID-19 prevention strategies remain critical to protect students, parents, teachers and staff. Schools will have a mixed population of both people who are fully vaccinated and people who are not fully vaccinated. It is important that steps be taken to protect all students and staff from COVID-19 and limit the spread of the virus.

- Vaccination
- Mask use
- Physical distancing
- Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine
- Staying home when sick and getting tested
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Cleaning and disinfection

DHEC strongly recommends mask use for all people when indoors in school settings, especially when physical distancing is not possible.

## **Individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 (but no known exposures to COVID-19)**

Individuals will be excluded from school, if they have any of the following with or without fever:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing -or –
- Loss of taste or smell -or –
- New or worsening cough

This is not a complete list of all symptoms of COVID-19. Other symptoms may include fever, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea/vomiting, or diarrhea. A person is able to spread the virus up to two (2) days before they have any symptoms, but many COVID-19 cases show no symptoms at all.

## **Individuals Who Test Positive**

Isolation is required for all individuals who test positive with COVID-19.

Criteria for Return:

- 10 days since date of test collection or symptoms onset – and –
- 24 hours since the last fever without the use of fever-reducing medication – and –
- Symptoms have improved – there are no new or worsening symptoms

A person who has symptoms of COVID-19 but has received a negative test for COVID-19 or has visited a health care provider and received an alternate diagnosis that would explain the symptoms of COVID-19. The person can return to school when they meet return criteria, per DHEC exclusion list and:

# Lancaster County School District COVID Guidance

- It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine);  
AND
- They have felt well for 24-hours.

## Close Contact (New)

DHEC defines close contact among students and staff in the K-12 setting as those unvaccinated individuals within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period from 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or specimen collection for an asymptomatic infected person) until the infected person meets criteria for release from isolation.

- The close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) **if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) wore masks** during the exposure time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.
- That means that “close contact” distance for a student can be reduced for students from 6 feet to 3 feet IF BOTH the infected student and the exposed student are both wearing a mask during the exposure time. (**\*New DHEC Guidelines 8/23/2021 requiring masks for students at 3 to 6 feet**)

The standard CDC definition of close contact (less than 6 feet apart, regardless of mask use, for a total of 15 minutes or more) applies to all unvaccinated adults and students, including teachers, staff, or other adults in the school setting, other than the exclusion listed about for students.

## Quarantine (NEW District Guidelines 8/25/2021)

Individuals will be excluded from school if identified as being in close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 2 days (24-48 hours) prior to the onset of symptoms (or date of test collection if no symptoms).

CDC continues to recommend quarantine for 14 days after last exposure. The Lancaster County School District will continue to follow the recommended the 14-day quarantine, but will provide options to employees and students to reduce the duration of quarantine to 10 days if the first ten (10) days of quarantine have been completed and there has been no additional exposure and no symptoms have been reported during daily at home monitoring.

**A close contact who is ending quarantine on the 11<sup>th</sup> day and returning to the school environment must do the following for days 11 through 14:**

- 1. Wear a mask over both the nose and mouth for the remaining days of the 14-day quarantine while at all Lancaster County School District Facilities and/or events**
- 2. Must follow physical distancing guidelines,**
- 3. Continue to daily monitor symptoms and**
- 4. if symptoms develop, notify the school and not report.**

**Household close contact:** If the child or staff member lives in the same household as a positive individual, their quarantine period begins on the date their household member has been cleared

# Lancaster County School District COVID Guidance

from their isolation period. The household contact would complete the positive individual's isolation (usually 10 days) and the additional 14-day quarantine for a total of 24 days. The Lancaster County School District will provide options to employees and students to reduce the duration of quarantine to 20 days if the first twenty (20) days of quarantine have been completed and has been no additional exposure and no symptoms have been reported during daily at home monitoring.

**A household close contact who is ending quarantine on the 21<sup>st</sup> day and returning to the school environment must do the following for days 21 through 24:**

- 1. Wear a mask over both the nose and mouth for the remaining days of the 24-day quarantine while at all Lancaster County School District Facilities and/or events**
- 2. Must follow physical distancing guidelines,**
- 3. Continue to daily monitor symptoms and**
- 4. if symptoms develop, notify the school and not report.**

A person who is **not fully vaccinated** and has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 can return to school after completing the specified quarantine. The quarantine begins after the last known close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual.

A person who is **fully vaccinated** and does not have any symptoms after a close contact with someone with COVID-19 does not need to quarantine, if they voluntarily choose to provide documentation of their full vaccination status to eliminate the need for quarantine. It is recommended they get tested 3-5 days after exposure. It is important for them to wear a mask at school until 14 days after exposure or until they receive a negative test result.

A person who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 3 months and does not have symptoms after a close contact with someone with COVID-19 **must** wear a mask at all times while in the school, monitor for symptoms daily and throughout the day, practice social distancing to the extent possible, practice good hand hygiene, and clean frequently touched surfaces often until 14 days after exposure.

A person who has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19, who develops symptoms while in quarantine and has no other alternate diagnosis to explain the symptoms can return to school when

- It has been 10 days since the first day of symptoms;  
AND
- It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine);  
AND
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.

**\*\*This applies to vaccinated or unvaccinated individuals.**

**At-home self-testing for COVID-19:** The LCSD will not accept results from at-home/over-the-counter self-test due to the possibility of improper specimen collection by the individual and misinterpretation of the result by non-medical personnel.

# Lancaster County School District COVID Guidance

## **Athletics/Activities\***

- Close contacts will include anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes) from 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or specimen collection for an asymptomatic infected person) of the infected person.
- To determine who may be a close contact, investigators need to consider total time spent together during the infectious period. This includes time on the bus, bench, locker room, field/court/arena, etc. unless it is known that they were unlikely to be in close proximity of each other.

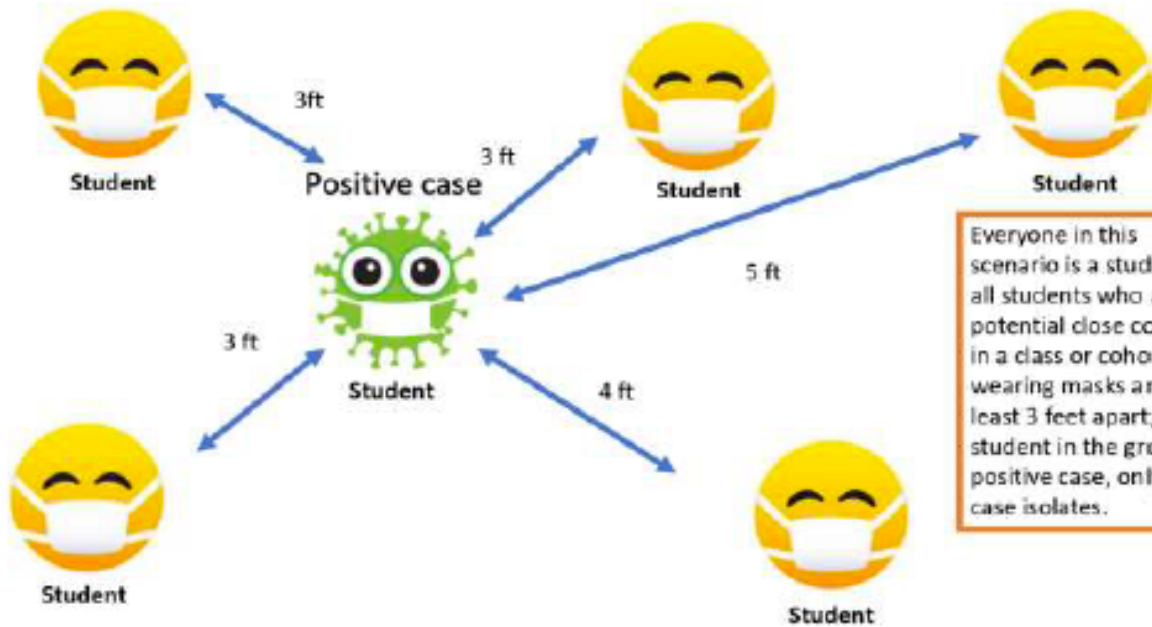
\*Activities where forced expiration produces increased respiratory droplets in the surroundings, including shouting, singing, physical exertion, etc.

## **Continuing Instruction During COVID Absences**

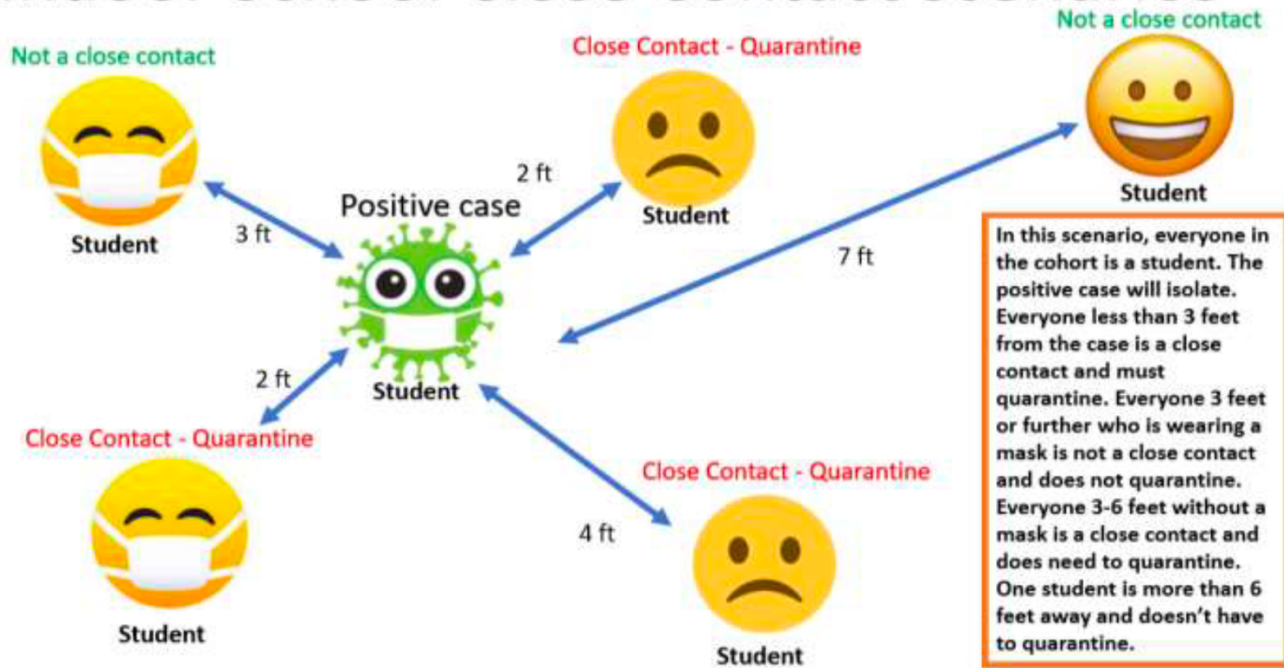
If student is home on isolation or quarantine, please communicate with the student's teacher(s) and obtain the link to Google Meet and schedule so the student may log in to the class for critical parts of the classroom instruction or access recordings of classroom instruction. In addition, the student will be able to access assignment through Google Classroom.

# Lancaster County School District COVID Guidance

## Indoor School Close Contact scenarios



## Indoor School Close Contact scenarios



# Lancaster County School District COVID Guidance

