

TO: Le Roy Central School District Board of Education
FROM: Merritt Holly, Superintendent of Schools
DATE: November 23, 2021
RE: COVID-19 Update and Protocols – Role of the LHD

In my opinion, the underlying issue for schools will continue to be the State issued directives, the interpretation of said directives at the Local Health Department (LHD), and the implementation of what is best practice at the local level. All of this is being done to protect local communities from an outbreak and spread. What is being done though can look very different from county to county.

At the December 14, 2021, Board of Education Meeting, I will share our updated COVID-19 data as we move fully indoors and manage the holiday season.

Here is the timeline when the guidance came out, quick summary/highlight of the guidance, and LHD supporting documents:

NYSDOH/NYSED Guidance – July/August 2020

- Masks (CDC/NYSDOH), social distancing (6-feet) CDC/NYSDOH), health screen (before/at school) (NYSDOH), quarantine CDC/NYSDOH/LDH), contact tracing (LDH), in-person learning, hybrid learning model, and remote learning (local decision).
- Close vs. Proximate Contact – How long? Consecutive during the day? 24 hours? (LHD decision in this area)
- 14-day quarantine (CDC/NYSDOH)

CDC/NYSDOH Guidance – January 2021

- 10-day quarantine (CDC/NYSDOH/LHD)

CDC/NYSDOH Guidance – April 9, 2021

- Move from 6-feet social distancing to 3-feet social distancing (with masks on) – still eating lunch 6-feet apart (CDC, NYSDOH, LDH)
- Le Roy CSD – moves from Hybrid Learning Model to in-person learning

CDC/NYSDOH Guidance – June 7, 2021

- No masks outdoors (NYSDOH)
- Limited capacities indoor and outdoor based on venue/participants (NYSDOH)

CDC/NYSDOH Guidance – July 8, 2021

- Summer school – mask wearing is strongly encouraged, not required (NYSDOH)

- Maximize space for social distancing

NYSDOH/LHD Guidance Return to School – September 2, 2021

- In accordance with the Commissioner’s determination issued pursuant to 10 NYCRR 2.60, all students, personnel, teachers, administrators, contractors, and visitors must wear masks at all times indoors, regardless of vaccination status (NYSDOH/Governor).
- Vaccines – All public school districts and non-public schools should support opportunities for students and staff to access COVID-19 vaccination clinics in collaboration with local health partners (NYSDOH, LHD)
- Social distancing – 3-feet (NYSDOH)
- Quarantine and close contact - People who are fully vaccinated do not need to quarantine after contact with someone who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 unless they also present possible symptoms of infection; however, they should be tested 3-5 days after exposure and must wear a mask indoors for 14 days or until they receive a negative diagnostic test result (CDC/NYSDOH/LHD)
- COVID-19 Testing – diagnostic and screening testing - Schools must establish the capability to conduct or offer screening testing according to the Commissioner’s testing determination issued pursuant to 10 NYCRR 2.62. Schools have flexibility in how they operationalize screening testing (NYSDOH/LHD)
- All schools should review and adopt all aspects of the Schools Guidance developed by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), available here. Consistent with the CDC guidance, schools/districts have the authority to decide how to implement the CDC guidance based on local conditions, needs, and input from their Local Health Department (LHD).
- **Ultimately, the decision to adopt certain mitigation measures will reside with the local community based on local circumstances, unless otherwise required in this document or other relevant guidance, regulations, or orders. (LHD)**

Updated Testing and Quarantine – October 27, 2021

- **LHD is the entity responsible for deciding whether to adopt any of the following practices and are under no obligation to do so.**
 - Ensure the opportunity to participate is available to every school in the county. Adoption of the following practices must be a county-level, not school-level, decision in order to guarantee consistency. LHD’s may not permit a school that has access to independent funding for test kits to adopt a “Test to Stay” while prohibiting another school with inadequate resources from doing so.
- “Test to Stay” (TTS) is a strategy that allows close contacts to avoid school exclusion (but not other parameters of quarantine) by testing negative with a rapid NAAT or antigen test (e.g., BinaxNOW) on each school day for seven days after exposure. At this time, the NYSDOH does not recommend TTS. However, if LHDs choose to allow TTS to occur in schools within their jurisdiction, NYSDOH encourages them to ensure the following:

1. The school/district must have a written protocol that:
 - a) Considers equity (i.e., families should not have to pay for testing, or if they do, then the inability to pay should not prevent a student from being eligible for TTS),
 - b) Includes actions to follow-up on transmission (e.g., contact tracing) in the event that an individual tests positive, and
 - c) Other factors deemed essential or important by the LHD or school.
 2. The daily test must be conducted and the results received before the school day begins, and positive individuals excluded/isolated per existing procedures.
 3. If the test is done in an unmonitored setting (e.g., home), a mechanism to ensure that the test is done correctly and on the correct person must exist.
 4. The exposed person who is allowed to remain in school through TTS must still be quarantined outside of after school/evenings; no community activities or extracurricular participation including clubs, sports, arts/performance activities, etc.).
 5. If the exposed person who is allowed to remain in school through TTS develops symptoms, they must be excluded from school per current school guidance.
- “Test Out of Quarantine” - NYSDOH has received questions as to whether it is acceptable to allow people under quarantine to shorten their quarantine by receiving negative COVID-19 test results. At this time, the NYSDOH does not recommend testing out of quarantine. However, if LHDs choose to allow this practice in their jurisdiction, it should align with CDC recommendations, which are currently as follows (emphasis added):

“When diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available, then quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen tests negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring. The specimen may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation (e.g., in anticipation of testing delays), but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day”
 - **NYSDOH will not provide new “Test out of Quarantine” technical assistance or resources for schools located in jurisdictions who permit the practice(s).**

Questions to think about (next meeting) –

1. Are the protocols we have in place working?
2. What does the current data say?
3. How does the data compare to last year?