



**Ann Arbor Public Schools
Updated School Guidance:
COVID-19 Protocols for K12 Students and Staff
UPDATED April 2022**

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Overview

AAPS continues to prioritize in-person learning while implementing available prevention measures to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission in our schools. The purpose of this document is to share updated AAPS COVID-19 protocols for students and staff based on new guidance from the Washtenaw County Health Department and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

As before, AAPS uses a responsive and layered approach to COVID-19 mitigation strategies. The protocols below show a general response to student cases. Each case will be considered and managed based on the individual factors involved. The district response may be adapted as necessary based on the number of cases impacting a school or other factors.

Please note: Public health guidance and related implementation protocols are subject to change based on a number of factors, including case trends and new research findings.

Summary of Protocol Changes

The March guidance broadens the schools settings that are considered low risk, and no longer provides separate guidance for unvaccinated and vaccinated students who have high risk exposures.

The WCHD guidance also makes universal masking *optional* when community COVID-19 levels, as defined by the CDC, are in the “green” (low) or “yellow” (medium) levels. **At this time, as allowed by the guidance, AAPS is maintaining universal indoor masking as an important layer of protection against school-based transmission.**

What does this mean in practice for students and staff?

1. **Vaccination status and boosters (for staff) still matters for all staff and for students ages 5-18.** Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated individuals are more likely to become severely ill and pass the coronavirus to others. High vaccination levels help protect everyone, including immunocompromised and medically fragile students and staff.
2. **Students with a household member who has COVID must follow the same rules, whether or not they are vaccinated.** Household exposure is the highest risk for contracting the virus and requires additional steps to reduce the risk of transmission at school (see question 7 on page 7).



3. **Continued reduction in the number of students who are placed in quarantine.** The focus now is on monitoring for symptoms, wearing well-fitted masks consistently while indoors, and district support for student COVID testing (either Test to Stay in schools or through the backpack testing program).
4. **Case notification and response process.** Case notification will continue in adherence to MDHHS to notify parents within 24 hours. Notification letters will be sent to school communities no more than once per day and include all cases reported in the last 24 hours. District response to student and staff cases will continue to focus only on high risk exposure situations, including clusters/outbreaks.
5. **The District Case Dashboard** will continue to be updated weekly until the end of the school year, even though the state requirement was discontinued in March.

Critical Actions for Parents

To keep schools open to in-person learning, and maintain the safest environments possible for students and staff, AAPS urges parents to partner with AAPS in preventing COVID transmission.

Parents must follow these critical steps to prevent the spread of COVID in AAPS:

- Monitor your student(s) for COVID symptoms every day using [this updated screener](#).
- Keep your symptomatic student home until you can get him/her tested. See the flowchart on page 4 for more information.
- Immediately contact your school office if your student tests positive.
- If anyone in your household tests positive for COVID, contact the school office/school nurse and follow the instructions on page 7.
- Get your 5-18 year old student vaccinated and/or boosted.
- Be ready to provide consent for your student to be tested at school as part of a Test to Stay program or in case your student develops symptoms at school.

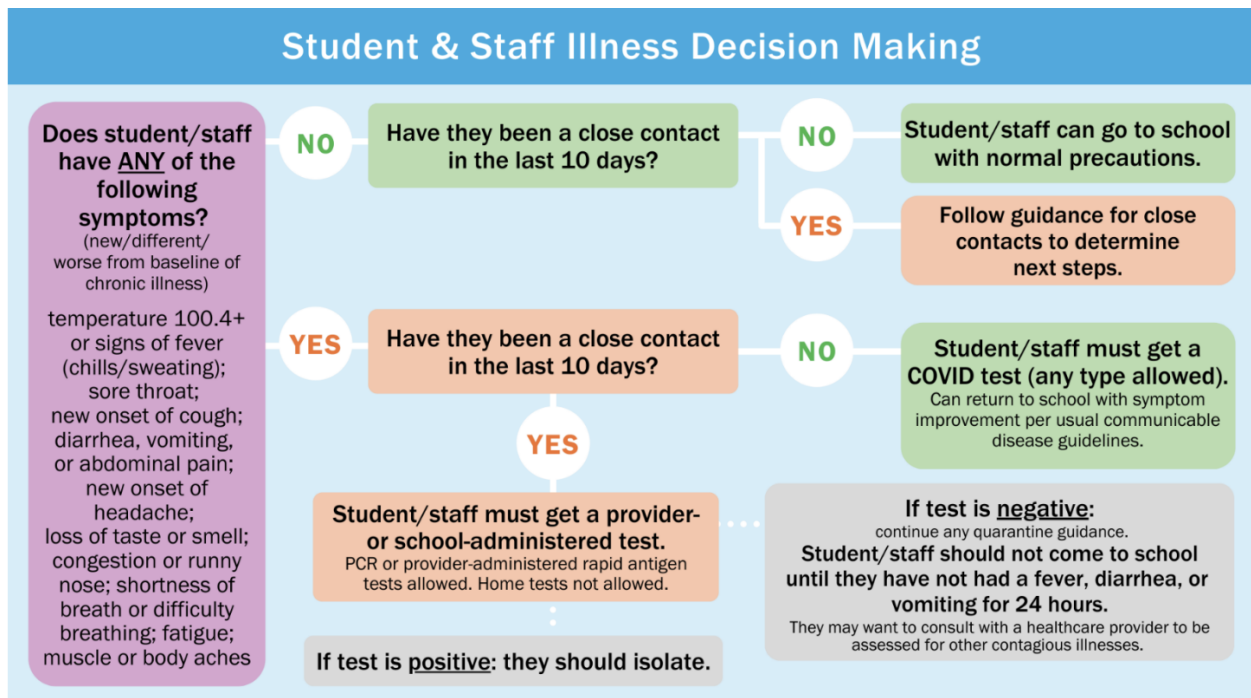
The next several pages provide detailed information based on common parent questions.

Frequently Asked Questions from Parents

Below are commonly asked questions regarding implementation of the new protocols based on [updated guidance for K12 schools](#) from the Washtenaw County Health Department.

1. My student has COVID symptoms. What should I do?

The Washtenaw County Health Department has updated the Illness Decision Making flowchart to include both students and staff. Resources for COVID-19 testing are available [here](#); the school office or school nurse may also have home test kits for families to use.



From page 3 of the Washtenaw County Health Department Summary of Guidance for K-12 Schools.

2. My student tested positive for COVID. Now what?

Let your school office know that your student tested positive as soon as possible.

- Provide the date symptoms began
- Provide the date the test was done, and what type of test was used



Your student is required to **isolate** for a minimum of 5 days.

- Day **zero** is the day symptoms began, or
- If no symptoms, the day the COVID test was done.

The WCHD has developed “What to do if you test positive” info sheets in several languages: [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), [Simplified Chinese](#), and [French](#).

3. When can my student return to school after testing positive?

The earliest a student can return is day 6, provided that:

- Symptoms have resolved, including:
 - No fever for 24+ hours (without fever-reducing medications)
 - Cold symptoms are resolved so that mask wearing can be consistent throughout the day
 - Cough significantly improved and not disruptive to school activities
 - Energy level allows for a full day of school participation
- The student agrees to wear a well-fitting high filtration mask such as a surgical, KN95, or N95 mask between days 6-10. (If needed, ask school office staff if masks are available.) The mask must be worn at all times except when eating.
- Contact your school nurse with questions about symptoms and school return

If symptoms have not resolved or significantly improved by day 6:

- Continue to isolate until symptoms are resolved or until 10 days have passed
- Contact your school nurse with questions about safely returning to school

Additional recommended steps:

- Take a rapid antigen test on **Day 5**
- Negative: End isolation**; return to school following guidelines above.
- Positive:** Continue isolation through **Day 10** or until a negative rapid antigen test received.
- Be more cautious for a full 10 days, limiting exposure to others.
- Consider isolating for a full 10 days if around vulnerable populations (e.g. immunocompromised students and staff)

4. Have the contact tracing and quarantine guidelines for students changed?

Under the new WCHD guidance, exposures in most K-12 school settings do not require contact tracing. Exposures that occur in classrooms, buses, meal times, carpooling, and most extracurriculars do not require contact tracing and quarantine. Schools send a general notification letter to classrooms or buildings with instructions to closely monitor for symptoms and get tested as needed.

Quarantine is rarely required for K-12 students, as long as the school is universally masking or requiring 10-day masking for students with higher risk exposures.

Higher-risk exposures continue to require contact tracing, for example:

- Household and personal/social contacts of a positive case (regardless of vaccination status).
- Classrooms experiencing clusters or outbreaks. A “cluster” is when 10% of the classroom has tested positive for COVID, typically 3+ cases in a K-12 classroom, or 2+ cases in a preschool classroom.
- Other situations identified as “High Risk” as determined by the school nurse in consultation with the WCHD.

5. Will my student have to quarantine?

Students who are identified as close contacts in high risk situations such as those listed above may need to quarantine, based on the instructions below..

Students may still attend school as long as they can follow these rules:

- Monitor symptoms for 10 days
- Wear a well-fitted mask indoors for 10 days at all times, including extracurriculars, except when eating
- Participate in Test to Stay. Test to Stay is *Highly Recommended* for classroom clusters/outbreaks, and for students with a household member who has COVID.

See additional information about the Test to Stay program in question 8.

6. My student has been exposed to someone at school who tested positive for COVID-19. Now what?

Most school exposures do not require contact tracing and follow up with close contacts.

However, if your student is identified as a close contact based on exposure in a high risk situation, they will need to follow the guidance in listed in question 5.

7. Someone in my house tested positive. My student tested negative (or hasn't tested). Does my student need to quarantine?

The March guidance from the Washtenaw County Health Department makes a significant change in this area.

Both vaccinated students and unvaccinated students who have a household member with COVID follow the same protocol for staying in school:

- If symptomatic, stay home, get a test, and await results.** If positive, follow isolation guidelines.
- Monitor symptoms for 10 days
- Wear a well-fitted mask indoors for 10 days, including indoor extracurriculars
 - If the extracurricular activity is unsafe to participate unmasked (e.g. swimming) the student must participate in Test to Stay.
- Highly recommended: participate in Test to Stay using home tests or tests administered at school. Home tests are available at school buildings while supplies last.

8. What is the Test to Stay Program?

“Test to Stay” (TTS) allows students who would normally be quarantined to attend school while testing frequently. **In AAPS, Test to Stay is highly recommended for students in a classroom with a cluster/outbreak and for students with a household member who tested positive for COVID.**

The Test to Stay program is for asymptomatic students who are able to:

- Monitor symptoms for 10 days
- Test at school on days 1, 3, and 5 following exposure OR test at home, with the



parent sending a picture of the negative test result to the school nurse. Home test kits are available at each school while supplies last.

- Wear a well-fitting, high filtration mask such as a surgical, KN95, or N95 mask throughout the TTS time period. (If needed, ask the school office staff if masks are available.)

For their student to participate in Test to Stay, parents must fill out a registration and consent form, and may be asked to stay at school until their student's test result is read.

9. What happens if there are several cases in my student's classroom?

When there are 3 or more cases in a K-12 classroom (or 10% of the class), everyone in the class is considered a "close contact." Regardless of immunization status, all students in the classroom must monitor for symptoms and wear well-fitting masks for 10 days. It is highly recommended that all students take part in "Test to Stay." The school nurse and/or building leadership will contact all parents.

A group of cases in a classroom may be labeled as an "outbreak" if there is likely school transmission.

10. Is there guidance for K-12 special education students who cannot mask or for students with a medical mask exemption?

Yes. Students who are identified as high risk close contacts (i.e. from a household case or a cluster/outbreak in their classroom) may do the following:

- If they've completed the primary vaccine series, they may still attend school.
- If they have not completed the primary vaccine series, but are able to test, they can test to stay for 10 days.
- If they have not completed the primary vaccine series, and cannot wear a mask or test, they must stay home for 10 days.

11. I have more questions. Who should I contact?

For personal medical questions, contact your child's health care provider.



For questions about attending or returning to school, or about these protocols, contact your school nurse. Call your school office or see links below for nurse building assignments and email addresses:

AAPS School Nurse Care Corner For Elementary Students and Families:

<https://sites.google.com/aaps.k12.mi.us/nurses-resources/school-nurse-care-corner?authuser=1>

AAPS School Nurse Care Corner For Secondary Students and Families:

<https://sites.google.com/aaps.k12.mi.us/nursesresources/school-nurse-care-corner?pli=1&authuser=1>

DEFINITIONS

Close Contact: a person who was within 6 feet of an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes within 24 hours.

Contact Tracing: the process of interviewing a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 infection and identifying any close contacts.

Isolation: separation from others, even household members, after someone tests positive for COVID-19.

Quarantine: separation from others, even household members, after being exposed to an individual who tested positive for COVID-19.

RESOURCES

COVID-19 Information <https://www.washtenaw.org/3095/COVID-19>

COVID-19 Daily Symptom Screener:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fJEQabz4Os1A-oBqqonRjylmhpHfE5svS3brtAa7t5o/edit?usp=sharing>

COVID-19 Testing Information: <https://www.washtenaw.org/3158/Testing>

AAPS School Nurse Care Corner For Elementary Students and Families:

<https://sites.google.com/aaps.k12.mi.us/nurses-resources/school-nurse-care-corner?authuser=1>



AAPS School Nurse Care Corner For Secondary Students and Families:

<https://sites.google.com/aaps.k12.mi.us/nursesresources/school-nurse-care-corner?pli=1&authuser=1>

What Families Can Do to Minimize Risk for Their Children: <https://bit.ly/WhatFamiliesCanDo>

What to Do if You Test Positive or Are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19:

<https://www.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/18539/Isolation-and-Quarantine-Guidance?bidId=>