As we move into the 2nd semester 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 with the Omicron variant bearing down upon us, the ongoing health and safety of K-12 students and staff remains paramount.

The following health and safety protocols reflect recently changed guidance from the Ohio Department of Health.

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 and ODH to the greatest extent possible.

We ask for your continued patience and cooperation through these challenging times.
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. Boosters strengthen your protection.

While Yellow Springs Schools has a high percentage of vaccinated teachers and staff (compared to surrounding school districts), we still do not have 100% of our eligible students vaccinated, despite holding multiple vaccination clinics on-site. There are no mitigation measures stronger than getting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster. Yellow Springs Schools will continue to promote vaccination efforts in conjunction with Greene County Public Health.

Vaccinations

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. During this pandemic, to date we have experienced two variants-Delta and Omicron. Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy in stopping the spread of the COVID-19 virus and its variants.

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. KN95 masks are recommended over cloth masks. 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 and contact the school when your child is ill. 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 revised 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.

Symptoms range from mild to severe and may appear two to 14 days after exposure to the virus.
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 unless participating in an athletic event.
- 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.
WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE COVID-19
Regardless of Symptoms or Vaccination Status

- Stay home for the next five days regardless of symptoms or vaccination status.
- Stay away from other people as much as possible (including those in your own household).
- If you can’t stay away from other people, wear a three-layer (or better) mask.

- Do you have a fever or other symptoms that haven’t started to get better on day six?

**YES**
- Stay home until your fever is gone and other symptoms are better.
- Wear a mask for the next five days.

**NO**
- Resume activities with a mask.
- Wear a mask for the next five days.

If you are having symptoms of COVID-19 and waiting for your test results, stay home until you get your results.

https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html
Dec. 30, 2021
WHAT TO DO IF YOU WERE EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WHO HAS COVID-19**

And, You are Unvaccinated or Your Vaccines Are Not Up-to-Date

- If you are unvaccinated or only received one dose of Pfizer or Moderna.

  or

- If you completed the primary series* of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine more than six months ago.

  or

- If you completed the primary series* of Johnson & Johnson vaccine more than two months ago and no booster.

For 5 days

- Stay home for five days after your last exposure, then wear a mask around others for the next five days.
- Test on day five.
- If you develop symptoms or test positive, stay home.

* A primary series consists of one dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine; or two doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine; or three doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine if you received an additional dose because you are immunocompromised.

Thank you to Clark County Combined Health District for sharing its graphic with the Ohio Department of Health.

https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html

Dec. 30, 2021
WHAT TO DO IF YOU WERE EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WHO HAS COVID-19**

And, Your COVID-19 Vaccines Are Up-to-Date

- If you received a booster dose of any COVID-19 vaccine.
- If you completed the primary series* of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine less than six months ago.
- If you completed the primary series* of Johnson & Johnson vaccine less than two months ago.

For 10 days

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days after your last exposure.
- Test on day five.
- If you develop symptoms or test positive, stay home.

If you tested positive for COVID-19 in the 90 days before your exposure.

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days.
- If you develop symptoms, get tested and stay home.

https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html

Dec. 30, 2021
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 school 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 10 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).

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.

Testing on day 5 after exposure is recommended.

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

We recognize that some students are unable to wear a mask because of a medical condition or developmental disability as recognized by their medical provider. In these instances, we recommend that LHDs and schools work together to determine if there is a safe way of allowing these students to remain in the school setting. When making this determination, the level of risk and the safety and health of other students must be considered.
To assess whether an unmasked student can safely remain in the classroom setting, consider:

- The masking policy of the school.
  - Universal masking policies reduce the risk of spread.
  - The more students who are wearing masks, the less the virus can spread. This reduces risk.
- The testing policy of the school.
  - Testing is another strategy that schools could choose to implement.
  - The more testing a school does, the greater the chance of identifying and isolating positive cases to reduce the risk of infecting others.
  - If districts are planning to allow an unmasked student to remain in the classroom setting, the student should be tested daily.
- The social distancing strategy of the school.
  - Maintaining a distance of 6 feet or more around the exposed and direct contact without a mask reduces risk.
- The ability of the student to follow mitigation strategies/behaviors.
  - Proper hand hygiene.
  - Proper cough etiquette.
  - Maintaining personal distance.
- Community transmission rates.
  - Community transmission rates should be considered.
  - High level of transmission rates in communities creates increased risk of transmission within the school environment and a greater chance for outbreaks.

When used in combination, these strategies provide an increased layer of protection for the exposed direct contact and other students and staff. Layering mitigation strategies including masking, testing, social distancing and appropriate hygiene measures helps reduce the risk of virus spread.
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.
- Testing on day 5 after exposure is recommended.

*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.
QUESTIONS?

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OR CONTACT YOUR CHILD’S SCHOOL WITH ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OR FOR MORE INFORMATION