

1/7/2022

Dear Grand Island Families:

Superintendents and officials from private, public and parochial schools met this afternoon with the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) to discuss several topics. We are very pleased to report that every school and district in Erie County now has the ability to begin a Test to Stay program as long as they adhere to the ECDOH requirements. For Grand Island that means we will continue to implement Test to Stay and make some minor adjustments as noted below. Additionally, there is new guidance regarding the quarantine and isolation period for COVID close contacts and for students who are positive with COVID-19.

As you review the information below please note that *isolation* occurs when an individual tests positive for COVID-19. *Quarantine* occurs when an individual has been identified as a close contact of a person testing positive for COVID.

How long will my child need to be isolated if they test **positive for COVID?**

Your child will need to **be isolated for 5 days**. Please note that “day 0” is the day of symptom onset or (if asymptomatic) the day they took their COVID test. If they are asymptomatic at the end of the 5 days or their symptoms are resolving, their isolation ends. The child can then return to school on Day 6. However, they will still need to wear a well-fitting mask when around other people for another 5 days. If they cannot tolerate a mask or if they still have symptoms, they will need to stay in isolation for another 5 days.

What if my child is identified as a close contact of someone with COVID?

It depends on the vaccination status of your child.

If fully vaccinated:

No quarantine is required. If symptoms appear, they need to quarantine and seek testing. Their quarantine ends if the test is negative or, if testing is not done, they isolate according to the guidance above.

If NOT fully vaccinated:

Parents may choose to offer consent and have their child participate in our Test to Stay program if the exposure has occurred as a result of being in school or on the bus. The Test to Stay program now requires **a minimum of 2 negative test results** in a five-day period. Our school nurse or school administrator will explain the Test to Stay program to you if your child falls within the eligible criteria.

If your child is **NOT fully vaccinated and you do not consent** to the Test to Stay program, your child will need to quarantine for five days. Starting with the date of your child’s last exposure, they will need to be quarantined for 5 days (please note that “day 0” is the last date of exposure) and wear a well-fitting mask around other people for 5 more days. The child can then return to school on Day 6.

If my child must quarantine because they are identified as a close contact, do they need a negative COVID test to return?

Yes, and No. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) suggests that close contacts test at day 5 with an antigen or PCR test. This is absolutely required if your child is participating in our Test to Stay program. If your child does not participate in the Test to Stay program and if your child is symptom free on Day 5, they do not need a negative COVID test to return on Day 6.

For more information, please see the Interim Update Isolation and Quarantine Guidance dated 1/4/2022 [found here](#).

Thank you for reviewing this new and updated information.

Sincerely,

Brian Graham, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools