



MAHWAH BOARD OF EDUCATION
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September 9, 2020

Dear Parents,

The start of the 2020-2021 school year is here and information about our nursing and medical processes need to be shared with you. We have a range of information about practices, process, and treatment to give to you.

If your child has a pre-existing health condition or if your child regularly requires nursing services within the school, then you are directed to make contact with the school nurse as your regularly do.

It is extremely important that during this world-wide medical crisis that we maintain the basic health measures that we know work. Please be diligent and continue with your child's current immunization schedule. Attend your regularly scheduled wellness and physical visits with the pediatrician. Most importantly, please do not send your child to school if they are ill, unwell, or present with any COVID-19 symptoms.

Students who have a fever or are using fever-reducing medication may not come to school. Students who are unwell at school will be isolated until an adult can come to get him/her. If your child arrives to school ill or presents as unwell during the school day, then you will be asked to have your child immediately picked up from school.

We are maintaining regular contact with our local and regional health department representatives. The New Jersey Department of Health provided the state with guidance on making decisions regarding the monitoring of community risk for the purpose of making future decisions to open or close either a single school or the entire district.

As guided by the New Jersey Department of Health, we have a daily process for monitoring all faculty and students' wellness. Everyone is required to complete the attestation form that requires the reporting of symptoms. Additionally, faculty will have their temperatures checked upon arrival.

We encourage you to remain informed of the range of symptoms associated with COVID-19 as they also are like many childhood illnesses. The most common symptoms include: fever, dry cough, tiredness. Less common symptoms include aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis (pink eye), headache, loss of taste or smell, rash on skin or discoloration of fingers or toes. Serious symptoms include difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure, or loss of speech or movement. Please seek immediate medical attention if your child has any of the serious symptoms.

Please keep your child home from school if they have a fever. Additionally, having a fever and one other potential COVID-19 symptom requires your child to stay home, contact your physician, and advise the school nurse. On average it takes 5-6 days from when someone is infected with the virus for symptoms to show; however, it can also take up to 14 days.

Students diagnosed with COVID-19 and have a positive test result -must stay home for at least 10 days from the time the symptoms started until symptoms are improved and no fever for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. Siblings and those who reside in the same household may not attend school and must stay home for at least 14 days.

Students and their families should be advised that the local health department may contact the family for contact tracing. If contacted, families should notify the contract tracer that the student attended school.

Families of students who are diagnosed with COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to advise the school nurse of the diagnosis. The district will use this information to advise the local board of health, initiate disinfecting protocols, and execute additional protocols as directed by the board of health.

In the unfortunate event that a confirmed case is found in a school then students and staff in close contact with the positive case will be informed and they will be excluded from school for 14 days.

Our district will report to the local health department any single case. An outbreak is only defined as, “two or more laboratory-confirmed (positive tests) of COVID-19 cases among students or staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a home, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting.”

Students or staff who have close contact with someone with COVID-19 must stay home for 14 days after last exposure or contact. Close contact is someone who lives in the same home or someone with whom the student has spent prolonged time in direct contact with or without a mask.

It is expected that parents/guardians and staff will consult with the school nurse regarding this matter.

Students or staff who present with COVID-19 symptoms and do not formally get tested must stay out of school for at least 10 days since symptoms first appear. Any student or staff who can produce proof of a negative COVID-19 test result or an alternative diagnosis to explain the symptoms will be permitted to return when symptom free. Student or staff must always stay out of school at least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication and until symptoms improve.

Please communicate with your school nurse regarding ANY matter related to health and wellness.

Continued community health and wellness relies upon *everyone* committing and pledging to:

- maintain social distancing,
- wear face coverings,
- frequently washing hands,
- staying home when unwell or exhibiting symptoms.

Staying home when unwell is the priority for community health and your son/daughter is best educated when healthy while in attendance. Academic demands and attendance requirements will be reconsidered on a case-by-case basis and there should not be undo pressure on you or your child to attend school while feeling unwell. Contact your school principal who will assist you in the continuation of your child's learning while in recovery.

Sincerely,