



January 12, 2022

Dear Vicksburg Community Schools Families,

Vicksburg Community Schools is announcing an update to our quarantine and isolation durations in light of the recommendations from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The CDC recommends shortening the quarantine and isolation duration to 5 days for those who test positive and for those who are exposed and unvaccinated. Beginning today, January 12th, VCS will be adopting those guidelines.

**Students and staff members who test positive for COVID-19 now have the option of returning to school after 5 days of isolation, if they are asymptomatic or if their symptoms are mostly improved.** Those students and staff will still be required to wear a mask through the 8th day after their positive test.

**Example 1:** A student receives a positive test on a Wednesday, which is considered Day Zero. They can return to school the following Tuesday, Day 6, as long as their symptoms are gone or mostly improved. That student must wear a mask through Day 8 which is Thursday, and can return Friday without a mask.

**Example 2:** A staff member receives a positive test on a Friday, which is considered Day Zero. They can return to school the following Thursday, as long as their symptoms are gone or resolving. The staff member must wear a mask through Day 8, which is Saturday. They can return to work on Monday without a mask.

**Unvaccinated VCS students and staff members who are exposed at school will still have access to the Test to Stay program, which also has updated protocols.**

**Test to Stay allows three options:**

1. **10 day Quarantine:** Families who do not want their children to wear a mask or be tested can quarantine for 10 days after exposure.
2. **5 day quarantine + 5 day mask and test on Day 6:** Families can choose to have their children quarantine for 5 days and return on the 6th day with a negative rapid antigen test and wear a mask through Day 10.

3. **Updated Test to Stay:** If you are unvaccinated, and choose the Test to Stay Protocol, you must test on Days 3 and 6, or the next closest school day after that. You can return to school without a mask on day 8. VCS will be providing testing sites at each individual school each morning to facilitate the program.

Outlined below is the Test to Stay protocol VCS will follow in the event of an exposure to an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 during school:

#### ***Vaccinated Students and Staff Identified as a Close Contact***

- If vaccinated, students and staff not showing any COVID-19 symptoms may stay at school / work and VCS strongly recommends they wear a mask at all times for 10 days and monitor symptoms.
- If a vaccinated individual starts showing symptoms, VCS will require the individual to go home and recommend obtaining a rapid antigen COVID-19 test.
- If the test comes back positive, the individual will be required to isolate for 5 days and can return on Day 6 if their symptoms are gone or mostly improved.

#### ***Unvaccinated Students and Staff Identified as a Close Contact***

- Students or staff who are identified as a COVID-19 close contact **may stay in school** under the following conditions:
  - Students or Staff who are asymptomatic may stay in school but must **wear a mask for 8 days** and take a rapid antigen COVID-19 test on Days 3 and 6 after the exposure date. If a test comes back positive, the student or staff member will be required to isolate for 5 days.

If you have someone in your household who is currently COVID-19 positive and you can not isolate yourself from them, the Test to Stay program does not apply. However, the quarantine time has decreased. Unvaccinated students and staff living with someone who is COVID-19 positive must first wait for the individual's 5 day isolation period to end, before beginning their 5 day quarantine period. Students can then return to school on Day 11 with a negative rapid antigen test, and wear a mask for Days 11 through 15. If you do not want to wear a mask, you can quarantine for 10 total days, following the 5 day isolation period of the household member, for a total of 15 days.

If your child can isolate away from the household member, please contact your building administrator for further guidance.

**VCS is also updating our communication policy for close contacts.**

We want to inform you that due to the sheer number of cases to contact trace, communication may be slower than you are used to. You may also be notified in a number of ways that your child has been determined to be a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19. Going forward, close contacts will be notified by an email, Skyward alert call and/or a phone call from building personnel. VCS also reserves the right to modify the Test of Stay program based on the availability of rapid antigen tests.

As always, if you have any questions about our policies or protocols, please call your school office.

Please note: if your child is currently under the previous Test to Stay protocol they are eligible for the updated guidelines.

We thank you for your continued support and patience this school year. VCS recognizes the divisiveness that exists in our community, state and nation regarding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We hope that these updated guidelines give our students and staff more options and continue to protect all those in our community.

Regards,

Keevin O'Neill  
VCS Superintendent