



HARTLAND CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

Chuck Hughes, Superintendent

9525 E. Highland Road
Howell, Michigan 48843

Telephone (810) 626-2100
Fax (810) 626-2101

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Dear Families,

We continue to work in partnership with the Livingston County Health Department (LCHD) toward our shared goal of keeping students in school while mitigating the spread of COVID-19. During October, the LCHD piloted a program that decreased the distance for secondary student close contacts from six feet to three feet. This pilot proved successful as we did not experience an increase in the spread of COVID-19 in our schools. With this data, LCHD has approved an expansion of this pilot, which will help keep more students in school.

Under this new pilot program, healthy, asymptomatic students who are at least 12 years old and in grades seven through twelve will not be required to be excluded/quarantined due to school exposure under the following conditions:

- The student is not currently in isolation after testing positive for COVID.
- The student is not currently excluded/quarantined for an exposure to COVID outside of the school setting.
- The student's exposure to COVID was not related to an identified cluster or outbreak within the classroom. "Cluster" means three or more students, teachers, or school employees, or workers who have been infected with COVID in the same classroom over a 14-day period.

We will continue to contact trace and notify families if their child has been identified as a close contact. Students identified as a close contact may be excluded/quarantined if the family chooses to do so. For those opting to continue to attend school, the LCHD recommends that the students:

- Wear a mask while attending school.
- Monitor for any symptoms of COVID-19 and stay home if showing any signs of illness.
- Are tested for COVID-19 three to five days after exposure. This is considered surveillance testing, which helps monitor the spread of COVID-19 and does not require that a student stay home with the test results pending, unless they are showing symptoms of COVID-19.

This new pilot was approved for students who are at least 12 years old and in seventh through twelfth grade based on the current vaccine availability for this age group and with the data from the October pilot that showed that decreasing the distance for student close contacts from six feet to three feet has not caused an increase in-school transmission. Moreover, this change is aligned with the approaches taken by other local health departments. Currently, this change does not apply to students under the age of 12 as there is presently no approved COVID-19 vaccination for that age group. Depending on the success of this pilot, and with the expected approval of a vaccine for children ages five to eleven, we hope the LCHD will extend this recommendation to our younger students in the future.

Sincerely,

Chuck Hughes