

October 21, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians, Students, and Staff,

As we look forward to our third month of school, we are very proud of our students and staff and their ability to adapt to our new-normal with the guidelines and restrictions regarding the pandemic.

We continue to work closely with our medical advisor Dr. Adam Perrin, Westbrook Health Dept, CT State Board of Education, and CT Department of Public Health in putting practices in place to keep our students and staff safe.

Our latest guidance is regarding the acceptance of the “rapid antigen test”, including the new BinaxNOW test, used to diagnose individuals with symptoms of COVID-19. It has been reported that often these tests which can provide point-of-care diagnosis are often less sensitive than the nucleic acid detection with the RT-PCR test and produce **false negative results** for patients who actually have the illness. Therefore, **we can only accept test results from the standard RT-PCR viral test going forward.** While the result takes longer to receive (usually 2-3 days), it is an accurate and reliable test.

To recap guidance on staying home due to possible COVID-19 related illness:

Please keep your child home and follow the illness guidelines if s/he has one or more of the following symptoms consistent with COVID-19:

- *Cough*
- *Shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing*
- *Fever and chills*
- *Muscle or body aches*
- *Fatigue*
- *New loss of taste and smell*
- *Headache*
- *Sore throat*
- *Congestion and/or Runny Nose*
- *Nausea or vomiting*
- *Diarrhea and/or GI issues*

There are 4 ways your child may return to school:

- The health care provider provides a note specifically stating they are not concerned that the symptoms are related to COVID-19 and provides an alternative diagnosis for the symptoms.
- The student provides a negative RT-PCR test result for COVID-19 and must be symptom free for at least 72 hours.
- If the student tests positive for COVID-19, they must isolate for a full 10 days after the test and be symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- If you choose not to take the student to the physician AND refuse to have a COVID test, the student must quarantine for a full 14 days and be symptom free for at least 24 hours.
- **If your child is ill, please call and/or email the office or the nurse and leave a detailed message regarding the reason your child is out and any symptoms he or she may be having.** This will allow the nurse to follow up with the parent/ guardian with any other questions she may have.
- All test results or doctor notes must be reviewed and verified by the school nurse prior to your child’s return. Medical documents may be sent to the nurse via email or fax for increased convenience.
- If your child is symptom free and under quarantine guidelines or waiting on test results, you may choose for your child to attend class remotely, rather than have those days marked as

absent. To do this, you must contact the office and let them know of your intention and they will let you know when your child is ready to access remote learning. ***Please note that if your child is sick, s/he should **not** access the remote learning, as we want your child to rest and recover! ***

Where can you go for reliable testing? Check out these sites:

- **211 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information** - <https://uwc.211ct.org/coronavirus-covid-19-information/>
- **Yale New Haven Health COVID-19 Testing** - <https://www.ynhhs.org/patient-care/covid-19/testing/testing-locations.aspx>
- **Community Health Care (CHC) COVID-19 Testing** - <https://www.chc1.com/covid-19-testing/>
- **Hartford Health Care COVID-19 Testing** - <https://hartfordhealthcare.org/health-wellness/coronavirus/testing>
- **Hartford Health Care Hotline** - (833)-621-0600 (Follow the prompt to sign up for a covid test, the person will ask for name, address, and DOB. They will set you up with the closest location to where you live with a time frame, usually 8-4 PM.
- **DOCS Medical Coronavirus (COVID-19) FAQ** - <https://docsmedicalgroup.com/docsurgentcare/coronavirus-covid-19/>

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact the school nurse.

Thank you,

Kayla Johnson, RN (Daisy Ingraham Elementary School)

Tina Bennett, RN (Westbrook Middle/High School)