

July 24, 2020

Dear Parents,

As we prepare for students to come back to school on September 1, the principals and I will be communicating frequently with you about the changes your child will experience upon their return. Below is a checklist from the CDC that has been tailored for Westbrook that outlines some of precautions and procedures we will be following. By working together, we can ensure the best possible health, safety and academic outcomes:

*Before school each day you will be asked to record on an electronic form the following:

- Check in with your child each morning for [signs of illness](#). If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, they should not go to school.
- Make sure your child does not have a sore throat or other signs of illness, like a cough, diarrhea, severe headache, vomiting, or body aches.
- If your child has had close contact to a COVID-19 case, they should not go to school. Follow guidance on what to do when [someone has known exposure](#).

When your child is sick please contact the school office:

Daisy Ingraham 860-399-7925 **Westbrook Middle** 860-399-2010 **Westbrook High** 860-399-6214

*Be familiar with local COVID-19 testing sites in the event you or your child develops symptoms. These may include sites with free testing available.

Local Testing Options: CVS Guilford and CVS East Lyme for adults. Children must go through their pediatrician, your local hospital or Community Health Center in Middletown or New London - 475 -241-0740.

*Make sure your child is up-to-date with all [recommended vaccines](#), including for flu. All school-aged children should get an influenza flu vaccine every season, with [rare exceptions](#). This is especially important this year because we do not yet know if being sick with COVID-19 at the same time as the flu will result in more severe illness.

*Review and practice proper [hand washing techniques](#) at home, especially before and after eating, sneezing, coughing, and adjusting a face cover. [Make hand washing fun](#) and explain to your child why it is important.

*Pack a water bottle for your child each day. Water fountains will not be used, except at the middle school where there are water bottle filling stations.

*Develop daily routines before and after school—for example, things to pack for school in the morning (like hand sanitizer and an additional (back up) cloth face covering) and things to do when you return home (like washing hands immediately and [washing worn cloth face coverings](#)).

*[Talk](#) to your child about precautions to take at school. Children may be advised to:

- Wash and sanitize their hands more often.
- Keep physical distance from other students.
- Wear a cloth face covering.
- Avoid sharing objects with other students, including water bottles, devices, writing instruments, and books.
- Use hand sanitizer (that contains at least 60% alcohol.) Make sure you're using a safe product. FDA [recalled](#) products that contain toxic methanol.
- Monitor how they feel and tell an adult if they are not feeling well.

*Develop a plan as a family to protect household members who are [at increased risk for severe illness](#)

*Make sure your information is current at school, including emergency contacts and individuals authorized to pick up your child(ren) from school. If that list includes anyone who is at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19, consider identifying an alternate person.

*Be familiar with Westbrook's plan for communicating with families when a positive case or exposure to someone with COVID-19 is identified. Student confidentiality will be maintained. Students and staff who become sick at school or who arrive at school sick will be sent home as soon as possible. We will keep anyone sick separate from well students and staff until the [sick person can be sent home](#). The Health department will assess students and staff who have been sent home due to suspected symptoms.

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, the cohort or school will most likely be dismissed for a time determined by the health department. The superintendent will immediately call Health Director Zachary Faiella and the school will be cleaned and disinfected. The Westbrook Health Department will follow up with the student/staff member and their family to provide additional guidance.

*Plan for possible school closures or periods of quarantine. If transmission is increasing in our community or if multiple children or staff test positive for COVID-19, the school building might closed for an extended period of time. Similarly, if a close contact of your child (within or outside of school) tests positive for COVID-19, your child may need to stay home for a 2-week quarantine period. You may need to consider the feasibility of teleworking, taking leave from work, or identifying someone who can supervise your child in the event of school building closures or quarantine.

Students who are out of school for quarantining can participate in distance learning.

*Plan for transportation:

- If your child rides a bus, your child must wear a cloth face covering on the bus and talk to your child about the importance of following bus rules and any spaced seating rules. Students of the same family will sit together. The bus will load from back to front. Changing seats will not be permitted.
- If carpooling, plan on every child in the carpool and the driver wearing cloth face coverings for the entire trip. Each school will use grade level cohorts to the extent possible to reduce exposure to other people. Consider finding families within your child's group/cohort at school to be part of the carpool.

* If your child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan or receives other learning support (e.g., tutoring, speech, OT, PT, counseling), ask your school principal or the Director of Special Education, Madeline Illinger, how these services will continue.

* Consider limiting your child's in-person out-of-school interactions to children in the same cohort where possible or to activities where physical distancing can be maintained.

* Reinforce the concept of physical distancing with your child.

* Plan for increased outdoor opportunities in gym by sending them with a hat, wear shoes conducive to the outdoors, encourage staying a minimum of 6 ft apart.

Parents who temporarily choose not to send their child to school should contact the school if you have not communicated your decision or want to change your decision at any time.

We look forward to seeing our students in September and appreciate your partnership as we work together to establish protocols to keep our students and staff safe and healthy. I will continue to keep you updated on our school opening plans. For more information visit the district website to view Westbrook's Reopening School Plan.

Sincerely,

Patricia Charles
Interim Superintendent