

# High Bridge School District

## COVID-19 Protocols 2021-2022

As we open another school year while still in the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to let you know the COVID-19 protocols that are in place for the 2021-2022 school year, which are included in the [High Bridge Safe Return Plan 2021-2022](#) and outlined in the NJ Department of Education's The Road Forward guidance. These protocols are subject to change if we receive any new guidance from the NJ Department of Health, the Governor or the CDC.

1. **Vaccinations** - As per the Governor's Executive Order 253, p5,1: the COVID-19 vaccine is a requirement for all school staff beginning October 18, 2021.
  - a. Staff must provide proof of vaccination to your school nurse by or before October 18, 2021. This proof of vaccination will be added to your immunization file and it will assist with contact tracing if needed.(See your school nurse for acceptable documentation).
  - b. Any covered workers that have not provided adequate proof that they are fully vaccinated must submit to a minimum of weekly or twice weekly testing on an ongoing basis until fully vaccinated.(See your school nurse for acceptable testing/documentation).
  - c. The vaccine is not a requirement for students, but if your child has been vaccinated for COVID-19, please send in a copy of the vaccination record to your school nurse so that they may add it to your child's immunization file and it will assist with contact tracing if needed.
2. **Masks** – As per the Governor's Executive Order 251, masks are required for all individuals indoors in district and school buildings no matter your vaccination status. There are exceptions which are listed in [the Order \(on page four, section one\)](#). As a public school district, we must follow this Order; [masks are being mandated by the Governor and it is not a local board of education decision](#). The mask mandate can only be modified or revoked by the Governor. Students will have the opportunity for mask breaks (with six feet distancing) as needed.
3. **Screenings** – Staff and parents must conduct a Covid screening each morning before coming to school. See the link for details: [District Covid Daily Pre Attendance Screening](#), or [Staff Covid Daily Screening](#).
4. **COVID-19 Positive Cases** – If any student or staff member, either vaccinated or unvaccinated, tests positive for COVID-19, please report the positive case to the health office so we can contact trace if needed (Elementary School, call 908-638-4105 ext. 4218; Middle School, call 908-638-4101 ext. 4118).
5. **Isolation**– Isolation is still in effect for ill individuals or those who test positive for COVID-19 as follows:
  - d. Ill individuals with COVID-like symptoms who have not been tested or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 must stay home until at least 10 days have passed from symptom onset **and** at least 24 hours have passed after resolution of fever without fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms,

- e. Persons who test positive for COVID-19 but who are asymptomatic must stay home for 10 days from the positive test result.
- f. An alternate diagnosis (including a positive strep test or influenza swab) is not acceptable for individuals who meet COVID-19 exclusion criteria to return to school earlier than the timeframes above. Documentation of a negative Covid-19 test must also be provided to the nurse before returning to school. *(Note: Exceptions made be made based on level of community transmission and COVID-19 exposure status).*

**6. Close Contacts and Quarantine** – The CDC has an exception for close contacts in K-12 indoor classroom settings as follows: “the close contact definition excludes students who are within 3-6 feet of an infected student **if** both the infected student and exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.” Anyone needing to quarantine will be notified by one of the school nurses or the County Health Department.

In circumstances where masks are not worn, such as lunches, PE class, sports, etc., the following guidelines will be followed for close contacts:

- **Unvaccinated** individuals identified as close contacts of an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 will be excluded from school and should quarantine for 10 days, or 7 days with a negative test result collected at 5-7 days. If the county's COVID-19 activity level reaches High, close contacts will be excluded from school and quarantined for 14 days. *Note: COVID-19 Activity Levels are determined by the New Jersey Department of Health.*
- Exposed close contacts who are **fully vaccinated** and have no COVID-like symptoms:
  - a. Do not need to quarantine, be excluded from school, or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
  - b. Should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure.
  - c. If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including testing and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation of care.

**7. Schoolwork While on Quarantine** – Students who are quarantined will receive a Google Meet link to log in and attend class virtually. (Virtual instruction is offered for quarantined students only per the NJ Department of Education.) Quarantined students can also meet virtually with teachers by appointment.

**8. Visitors in the building-** Visitors will be restricted. (Exceptions made be made based on community transmission levels.) Visitors must be pre-approved by the building nurse. Any visitor not pre approved, will not be allowed to enter the building.

**9. Social Distancing-**

- While in the classroom, maintain three feet (3) distance between students. When masks are removed (for eating), maintain as much distance between students as possible.
- Six feet (6) distance should be maintained as much as possible between adults and students or between unvaccinated adults.

- Avoid group seating, face desks in the same direction
- When outside of the classroom, maintain as much distance as possible - stagger leaving classrooms to prevent crowding in hallways.

**10. Shared Items**- Limit the use of shared items as much as possible. If items need to be shared, they must be cleaned between uses.

We appreciate your cooperation with these protocols in order to keep our students and staff safe and healthy while at our schools and helping us to provide a traditional school year for students.