



## NASSAU COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

August 11, 2021

Dear School Superintendent,

On August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) reported that they will be providing “Back to School Guidance.” The Nassau County Department of Health (NCDOH) acknowledges that K-12 school districts and K-12 private schools are the controlling entity for their schools, and ultimately will decide their own preventive protocols. However, as NYSED is the jurisdictional body overseeing schools, and as NYSED reported in their letter that they intend to make the guidance consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations, NCDOH recommends school districts follow the forthcoming guidance from NYSED.

While awaiting the NSYED document, school districts can find additional guidance for K-12 school reopening plans from CDC at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>. CDC guidance includes discussion of prevention strategies such as vaccination promotion, mask use, physical distancing, screening testing, ventilation, handwashing, staying home when sick. This guidance also includes considerations when it comes to lunchtime, sports and busing.

Nassau County Department of Health recommends that those who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, be vaccinated. Additional vaccination information is available at <https://www.nassaucountyny.gov/vaccine>

NCDOH will continue to promote a positive and productive collaborative relationship with school districts in response to future positive cases in students and school staff. Positive cases with appropriate school contact tracing should be reported to Nassau County Department of Health. Directions will be available on the NCDOH website. A case must be isolated for 10 days, and in line with CDC recommendations. A close contact must be quarantined for 10 days (see exceptions below.) Updates will be available on the NCDOH website.



**2018 NACCHO LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF THE YEAR**

200 COUNTY SEAT DRIVE, MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501

Phone: 516-227-9500 Fax: 516-227-9696



In K-12 school settings, Nassau County Department of Health has adopted the CDC definition for close contacts. According to CDC, a close contact is defined as

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>)

**Close Contact through Proximity and Duration of Exposure:** Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, *three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes*). An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting from 2 days before they have any symptoms (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before the positive specimen collection date), until they meet criteria for discontinuing home isolation.

- **Exception:** In the **K–12 indoor classroom** setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) if both the infected student and the 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.

According to CDC quarantine is also excluded for:

- People who have been fully vaccinated.
- People who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last three months.

Nassau County believes that students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority. We look forward to a prosperous school year.

Respectfully,



Lawrence Eisenstein, MD, MPH, FACP  
Commissioner of Health