

A Message to Parents/Guardians from the School Nurse -

Welcome back! As parents, students and staff prepare for the return to school, I would like to take the opportunity to review a few things in regards to COVID-19 for the start of the year. The school administration has put many hours into ensuring a safe return for staff and students again this school year. If you haven't had a chance to read Northeastern Local Schools Plan for 2021-2022, please do so as soon as possible.

Symptom Check:

As mentioned in previous communication to parents. We are asking parents to check their child for symptoms including a temperature check before sending them to school each morning. If a student is showing symptoms (listed below), please have them checked by a health care professional before sending them to school. When you are doing a quick assessment of your child before heading out the door each morning keep the following questions in mind. If you can answer "yes" to any of these questions, do NOT send your child to school. Please notify the school with the reason for your child's absence.

1. Has your child been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
2. Has your child had a positive-COVID-19 test for active virus in the past 10 days?
3. Is your child displaying any of the following symptoms *that you cannot attribute to another condition (asthma, allergies, migraines, etc.)*?
 - At least two of the following symptoms: fever (100.0 or above), chills, cold sweats, muscle aches or weakness, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose
 - OR -
 - At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell

In the Event of Illness:

Northeastern Local Schools will continue to work very closely with the Defiance County General Health District to help prevent and control the spread of illness in our schools and community. If we need to send your child home with the suspicion of COVID-19 or another illness we will factor in all of the information provided to determine a safe date for your child to return to school. You can expect that we may request that you contact your child's healthcare provider if we are sending your child home with an illness. If there is a positive COVID-19 case amongst our staff or student body that resulted in close contacts while at school or school related activity the community will be notified via Tinora's Live Feed. If your child is determined to be a "close contact" the school will be required to report this to the Defiance County General Health District and we will follow their guidance to ensure a safe return to school. If this happens you can expect a call from the school to notify you of the situation.

Quarantine:

Guidelines for when quarantine is necessary from exposure in the school setting has changed from last school year. I will briefly explain some of the changes here, but I am also including a link to a flow chart that the Ohio Department of Health has developed for "Guidelines for Quarantine":

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RPCJcJlIGsvYQWR6l32kPvL53sgdVQxJ/view?usp=sharing>

"Close contact" is defined as an individual within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes in a day. There may be situations where your child may be identified as a close contact, but is not required to stay home from school. To determine this we will be looking at every person who was within 6 feet of the positive case for 15 minutes or greater, then determine out of those contacts who were within the 3-6 feet range. If your child was within the 3-6 feet range quarantine is NOT required if your child is vaccinated or was wearing a mask at the time of the exposure. If your child is not vaccinated and/or was not wearing a mask at the time of exposure, he/she will not be able to attend school and be asked to quarantine at home until a safe date of return is determined. If your child is within the 0-3 feet range and is not vaccinated, he/she will not be able to attend school and be asked to quarantine at home until a safe date of return is determined. A frequently asked question is if Child A and Child B (most often siblings) live in the same household and Child A is determined a "close contact," while Child B has not been determined a "close contact," will Child B automatically be required to stay home from school or school related activities, during the time that Child A is required to stay home? The answer is NO, unless Child A becomes a positive case and Child B has been in "close contact" then the school will again follow guidance from the Defiance County General Health District to determine an expected date of return for your child.

Masks/Facial Coverings:

As mentioned in previous communication, your child will NOT be required to wear a facial covering while at school. However, if your child is riding school transportation he/she will be required to wear a mask while on the bus. Keep in mind masks/facial coverings may be required at any given time throughout the course of the school year.

Vaccines:

We will NOT be tracking students who have been vaccinated for COVID-19, but we may ask you to provide proof if your son/daughter is identified as a close contact to a positive case and we are trying to determine if quarantine is required. Your vaccination status will not be shared with anyone who does not NEED to know this information.

It remains our goal here at Tinora to try our best to keep every student and staff member safe whether they are masked, unmasked, vaccinated or unvaccinated! If you have any additional questions regarding this information or anything related to your child's health, please do not hesitate to ask. I can be reached by email (chesterman@tinora.org) or by calling your child's school office.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Carol Hesterman, RN, BSN, LSN
School Nurse