

# Dumont Public Schools

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Superintendent of Schools



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Dear Dumont School District Families:

On behalf of the Restart Committee, I want to thank you for your continued support and commitment to our schools as we navigate through a resurgence of the COVID-19 virus in our community and the evolving guidance from the CDC and the NJDOH. The committee met recently to review our Safe Return plan and continues to make adjustments based on parental and staff input, local data, and the new guidance that is provided from the CDC and state and local health departments. The following updates are an outgrowth of our most recent meeting.

## GENERAL REMINDERS

Last week, you should have received a letter with information related to the new reduced isolation and quarantine time frames. **The travel guidance has also been updated.** The new travel guidance requires self-quarantining after domestic travel (outside of NJ, NY, PA, & DE) and for international travel for those individuals who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated for **5 full days**. Please communicate with your child's school if you have plans to travel to confirm whether or not your child will need to quarantine before returning to school.

As a reminder, if your child is exhibiting **one** COVID-compatible symptom (*i.e. fever, chills, shivers, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste/smell, etc.*) **please keep your child home**, and contact your school nurse for further guidance. **The COVID-compatible symptom rule applies to students and staff regardless of vaccination status.**

Also, if you test your child for the COVID-19 virus for any reason, you should keep them home until the results are known. Please continue to communicate with your child's school during this process.

## HOUSEHOLD CONTACTS

Any siblings in the household must also be kept home until a negative COVID result is received for the ill child, or until the isolation/quarantine time frames are completed. Siblings who are fully vaccinated and/or have been confirmed as a COVID positive within the last 90 days (positive viral test from a laboratory) may not have to quarantine or isolate. **The school nurse will verify the status of siblings with parents.** If one of your children is sent home from school with a COVID-compatible symptom, you will be required to pick up your other children as well. **Revised guidance related to quarantine timeframes for household contacts will be provided to parents by your child's school.** This guidance can also be found on page 5 of the January 10, 2022 NJDOH update that is posted on the Coronavirus Information page on our district website.

**Please continue to cooperate with our nursing staff, teachers, and school administrators.** We understand that the information and protocols that we must follow can be overwhelming and sometimes even frustrating, but your continued understanding, patience, and cooperation is imperative to ensure that your children can return to school as soon as possible.

**DISTRICT COVID-19 STATISTICS TO DATE**

During the months of December and January, the district did see a dramatic increase in our COVID-19 positivity rate. Most of our cases are linked to outside exposure that occurred just prior to and during the holiday recess. Although the peak of transmission appears to be behind us, the virus is still impacting our school community, and it is important that we continue to work together to continue to keep our staff and students healthy and safe. The district is continuing to implement its health safety and cleaning protocols that will remain in place for as long as deemed necessary. We will continue to provide up-to-date statistics throughout the year.

**Positive Cases COVID Data by School (\*as of 1-17-22)**

<b>School</b>	<b>Total Cases to date</b>	<b># Cases (Sept.-Nov.)</b>	<b># Cases (Dec.-Jan.)</b>
Dumont HS	183	13	170
Grant School	97	4	93
Honiss School	106	8	98
Lincoln School	36	0	36
Selzer School	93	9	84
<b>District Totals=</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>481</b>

**VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION**

As you know, students who are not able to attend in-person instruction due to COVID-19 infection, or because they are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated close contacts, will be provided with virtual instruction. This instruction begins as soon as possible, which is typically on the second day of their isolation or quarantine period. However, students are still provided with instruction in an asynchronous fashion for the day(s) preceding the start of the “live” or synchronous instruction. When a teacher is absent from school, asynchronous instruction will be provided via the teacher’s Google classroom page (Gr. 3-12) or website (Gr. K-2). Parents are asked to contact their building principal if there is a delay in receiving “live” or synchronous instruction beyond the second day. Our shared goal is to continue to provide continuity of instruction for your children.

**RESUMPTION OF SCHOOL SNACK**

Elementary snack will restart on Tuesday, January 18, 2022. We ask that parents pack a simple snack that students can eat independently.

**LUNCH & SNACK**

As per the new CDC and NJDOH guidelines, students and staff who are eligible to return earlier on day 6 from an isolation or quarantine period of a minimum of 5 days (completely symptom free) must wear their mask at all times on days 6-10 (*including during Recess, Physical Education, Athletics, and other extracurricular activities*) and eat (*lunch and snack*) away from others. If possible, arrangements should be made for students who are returning from quarantine to eat lunch

at home during this period of time. If this is not possible or practical for families, arrangements will be made to provide students with an appropriate space to eat their lunch and snack. Students who are not able to take these additional precautions, will have the option to complete the entire quarantine timeline through day 10 at home with a return on day 11. Virtual instruction will continue to be provided if this option is selected.

### **STATUS OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCES**

Schools are continuing to plan for elementary and middle school concerts and various high school performances. Each school will communicate dates for performances and details outlining safety protocols for these events soon. We remain committed to providing our students with these additional opportunities to showcase their collective talents with their families and the community.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAMS**

As you may know, our sports programs are up and running. Most districts that are participating (including our District) are temporarily adding additional virus mitigation protocols, including limiting the number of spectators that can enter a venue. Most venues are allowing two spectators per athlete. Middle school coaches will communicate directly with parents of athletes related to spectator rules of various venues. The high school athletic department will communicate details about various venues via the Athletic Department website.

### **DAILY SCREENING & WEEKLY REMINDER EMAIL**

We continue to ask that parents check their children for COVID-compatible symptoms **prior to them leaving for school each day**. The NJDOH strongly encourages all individuals to monitor themselves for signs of illness every morning. Currently, a reminder email to complete an individual daily self-screening prior to leaving for school is being sent to families and staff every Sunday. (This week's email was sent today). If you are not receiving this email, please check your spam folders. If you are still not in receipt, please reach out to your child's school to verify that your email address is correct in our system. The email also provides information related to the Weekly COVID-19 Transmission Rate in the county. Currently our county remains in RED or "very high transmission." As a reminder, **all visitors (including parents) to our buildings are still required to complete a screening questionnaire that includes a temperature check.**

The Restart Committee will continue to meet throughout the year as it has done since the beginning of the pandemic, and will provide updated information as conditions change and evolve. We remain hopeful that we will get through this challenging period and will be able to continue to remain open for in-person learning in a safe, healthy, and supportive environment.

Please feel free to contact your building principal or my office if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Maria A. Poidomani, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools