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September 16, 2020

Dear Cleveland Hill School Community;

We recently received updated guidance from the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) for when a student or staff member has COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test. Though this guidance has yet to be posted on their website, it has been applied in recent COVID-19 cases in local school districts.

There are implications with this new guidance which I will clarify below. A copy of the memo we received today is attached for your review. This document will be added as an addendum to our re-opening plan on our website. This is an Erie County guidance document. New York State has yet to release any similar guidance. We will continue to keep you informed as we receive further information.

The notable changes are:

- The new 60-minute duration of exposure language may have a significant impact. Following previous guidance to minimize interactions, we cohorted all classes from Pre-K through 8th Grade. Meaning that kids are together in the same classroom for a majority of the day, surpassing the new 60 minute threshold.

Therefore, a positive COVID-19 test from any student or teacher who has been with the class for 60 minutes or more, may require all students and teacher(s) in that class to quarantine for 14 days. We would not know for certain until after the ECDOH contact tracers come in, investigate and make a final determination. We hope that the facts that we: have effectively implemented all CDC, SED and DOH health and safety recommendations, we have large classrooms, small class sizes and new air handler units, will be considered prior to final quarantining decisions. That said, I question whether or not these prescribed mitigations that we have in place will have any influence on the contract tracers' decisions.

Should this occur, and a group of students and teachers are required to quarantine for 14 days, instruction would shift to a distance learning model during the period of quarantine and isolation. A substitute teacher(s) would be brought in to teach the classroom teacher's hybrid students attending in school instruction on the opposite (Blue or Gold) days. Specific details and schedules will be provided by the building principal after the DOH has made their determination.

- The expectation that someone placed in isolation or quarantine at home will have access to "their own restroom" is also new. We know that this will not be possible for several faculty, staff and students. When I questioned the ECDOH on this, they responded; "If they don't have the capacity to do so, families should sanitize the bathroom after each use, focusing on the touch points like doorknobs, fixtures and handles."

Our strong school-community partnership has been vital in successfully opening school, and will be even more important as we move forward. We will continue to communicate changes to you as they come to us. Please remember to continue to administer the health screening survey each morning prior to your child leaving for school, and call our health office if your child has symptoms. If your child or anyone in the household receives a positive test result, please call us immediately and we can assist.

To familiarize you with our notification process, I have also attached the template we will use should there be a positive case here in school. This will be emailed to you and posted on our website upon our being notified. We will provide you all of the information that we legally can regarding any cases. The Erie County Department of Health will be responsible for notifying individuals that are required to quarantine.

We thank you again for your support and cooperation during these challenging times. Please reach out to your building principal with any specific questions.

Sincerely,

Jon MacSwan
Superintendent of Schools

Erie County Department of Health

Guidance for P-12 Schools and Higher Education when a student or staff member has COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test

What to do when a student or staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms

If the student/staff is at school when symptoms begin, the student/staff should immediately be sent home or to their school residence. The student/staff should be placed in isolation at home or at their school residence in their own room with their own bathroom.

One of the three following criteria must be met before the student/staff can return to school:

1. A note from the student/staff's medical care provider with an alternative diagnosis is provided OR
2. The result of a negative diagnostic COVID-19 test is provided OR
3. There have been at least ten days since the onset of COVID-19 symptoms.

The symptomatic student or staff member along with their household members that attend or work at a school will be offered a free point-of-care diagnostic COVID-19 test through the Erie County Department of Health.

What to do when a student tests positive for COVID-19

The student/staff should be placed in isolation in their own room with their own bathroom. All the following criteria must be met before the student/staff can return to school:

1. At least ten days after COVID-19 symptom onset or ten days from their first positive test if asymptomatic AND
2. Fever-free for at least 72 consecutive hours without the use of fever-reducing medication AND
3. Respiratory symptoms are improving.

What to do with classmates or staff members in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case

It is important to understand that protective measures such as maintaining six feet of physical distance and masking while in the classroom are practices aimed at **reducing the risk of infection**. However, having these practices in place does **not** mean that a classroom is exempt from quarantine in the event of a positive COVID-19 case. Duration of exposure impacts risk. Even with protective practices, the following quarantine rules apply:

1. Any student or staff member exposed to a COVID-19 case in a standard classroom setting or in other enclosed common school settings, such as a breakroom or office, for **60 minutes or more** will be instructed to quarantine in their own room with their own bathroom for 14 days from the last day of exposure to the COVID-19 case.
2. Any student or staff member exposed to a COVID-19 case in a large classroom setting (e.g., lecture halls with more than 50 students present) for **60 minutes or more**, and within a space consisting of **two seated rows** behind, in front of, and to both sides of the case, will be instructed to quarantine in their own room with their own bathroom for 14 days from the last day of exposure to the COVID-19 case. If seats are not assigned and individual proximity to the case cannot be determined, the entire classroom will be instructed to quarantine in their own room with their own bathroom for 14 days from the last day of exposure to the COVID-19 case.
3. If the exposure time was **less than 60 minutes**, no quarantine instruction will be given, **so long as** six feet of physical distancing was in place. However, those in the class should monitor for symptoms.
4. Persons under quarantine who develop symptoms should be tested for COVID-19. If the test result is positive, the student or staff member will be placed in isolation. If test result is negative, the student or staff member will continue in quarantine for the full 14 days.

Questions regarding this guidance can be direct to the Erie County Department of Health, Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance, School Program at (716) 858-7697 during normal business hours.



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[DATE]

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Dear PARENT/GUARDIAN:

The Cleveland Hill Union Free School District (the “District”) has received information of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the District. The individual who tested positive was last known to be in the (what building /on what day). Please be aware that the District cannot release the name or any other personally identifiable information regarding this individual.

In the event that your child may have had close contact with the individual who tested positive, you will be contacted by a local public health department representative. Your child is expected to comply with all instructions given if contacted by the health department, including any requirement to quarantine for a designated period of time. The District will work collaboratively with the public health representative through the contact tracing process to identify and inform anyone who has had close contact with the individual who tested positive.

The District has infectious disease health and safety protocols in place to minimize the spread of the virus and other illnesses. To that end, the building administrator will work closely with the Director of Facilities to ensure that any space and/or materials touched by the individual who tested positive for COVID-19 are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

The District’s comprehensive reopening plan remains available to view on our official website www.clevehill.org. Please refer to the Plan for more detailed information relative to the District’s contact tracing process and health and safety protocols, including cleaning and disinfection.

All students, parents, guardians, and staff should continue to monitor their health for symptoms of COVID-19, including, but not limited to, chills, new loss of taste/smell, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches, headache, congestion, nausea/vomiting and sore throat. If you or a family member begins experiencing any of these symptoms and suspect it may be COVID-19, contact your health care provider.

The District will work with any affected families to support them throughout this process. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child’s building administrator.

Sincerely,

Miss Sherman
Director of Student/Staff
Health & Safety

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