



LEARNING PREP SCHOOL

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COVID Protocols for School Year 2021-2022

Updated 2-6-22

We are following CDC, Mass DPH, and DESE guidelines closely to inform our internal decisions. We will update our policies as new information and guidelines come available.

We had an incredibly safe school year last year, in no small part because of our community's adherence to our protocols. Thank you in advance for your continued close attention to these guidelines. Together, we can provide a safe, in-person learning experience for all our students.

All staff and all students will be in person this year following a normal academic schedule. The following guidelines apply for everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

COVID Testing

LPS follows the updated testing guidance from DESE and DPH which includes the new option within the statewide testing program to offer weekly rapid at-home antigen tests to students and staff and discontinue contact tracing and Test and Stay programs.

- Testing is weekly, at home, on Sundays
- Tests are distributed to those who have opted into the program on Thursdays
- Please see the following letter for more information regarding the program and how to sign up for the opt in testing program

[at-home-testing-families](#)

Masking

Masks will be required at all times when in our buildings (except when eating).

Distancing

Students and staff will be at least three feet apart at all times when in our buildings. The only possible exceptions will be in classes where students are moving frequently and may be temporarily closer, such as during PE, horticulture, or food service. Seniors may also be closer than three feet in a school van during ELP weeks, with all windows open and their masks on.

Eating

Students will be eating outside under our tents as much as possible. When eating inside, we will maintain a 3-foot distance. Reminder: we are a nut free school.

Cleaning

Desk surfaces and other high-contact areas (handrails, bathrooms, etc.) will be cleaned three times a day. We will clean surfaces every time after eating.

Attestations

All staff and families must fill out a health attestation at the start of the year.

Vaccine

Although it is not a mandate, it is our expectation that every member of our community who can get vaccinated has been vaccinated and boosted. Please be in contact with Jenna Wilson, our school nurse, at jjwilson@learningprep.org to inform her of your child's vaccine status. This will be kept confidential.

Air quality

We will keep fresh air circulating in every classroom. When we have to shut windows, we will have HEPA air filters that will maintain 4-6 air changes per hour, which is the number of recommended changes by the Harvard-Chan School of Public Health.

LPS Van use

When students are being transported via LPS van, all windows will be open and all staff and students will be masked.

Visitors in school

We will be allowing visitors in the buildings under the following circumstances/conditions:

- IEP meetings
 - We encourage all team meetings to be virtual. This policy is subject to change, as we continually monitor COVID infections in Massachusetts, vaccinations for different age groups, and other factors.
- Testers/evaluators/affiliates
 - We are allowing testers/evaluators/affiliates who are fully vaccinated to meet with students after they have been seen by our school nurse for a health screening and have shown proof of vaccination.
- Observers
 - We are allowing observers who are fully vaccinated to observe classes that can accommodate them at 3ft. distance after they have been seen by our school nurse for a health screening and have shown proof of vaccination.

DESE/DPH protocols for responding to COVID scenarios

Learning Prep School follows the most updated DESE/DPH guidance regarding close contacts and responding to COVID scenarios as outlined below.

Section 1

COVID-19 symptoms

At this time, based on the advice of public health officials and medical experts, DESE and DPH are revising the symptoms list to align with DPH statewide guidance. **While previous guidance provided a differentiated symptoms list for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, the new symptom list below applies to all individuals, regardless of vaccination status.** Individuals who experience any symptoms on the list below should follow the testing and quarantine response protocol for symptomatic individuals (Protocol C) as outlined in Section 2 of this document.

COVID-19 symptoms list:

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Sore throat, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea when in combination with other symptoms
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

Definition of a close contact

Close contacts are defined as individuals who have been within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual while indoors, for at least 15 minutes during a 24-hour period. Please note that the at-risk exposure time begins 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or time of positive test if asymptomatic) and continues until the time the COVID-19 positive individual is isolated. In general, close contacts should follow the testing and quarantine response protocols in Section 2 of this document. However, certain close contacts are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols as noted below.

The following close contacts are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols:

- **Asymptomatic, fully vaccinated close contacts:** Individuals who are asymptomatic and fully vaccinated are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- **Classroom close contacts:** An individual who is exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual in the classroom while both individuals were masked, so long as the individuals were spaced at least 3 feet apart, is exempt from testing and quarantine

response protocols.

- Bus close contacts: Individuals on buses must be masked according to federal requirements. As such, individuals who are masked on buses when windows are open are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- Close contacts who have had COVID-19 within the past 90 days: An individual who has been previously diagnosed with COVID-19 and then becomes a close contact of someone with COVID-19 is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols if:
 - o The exposure occurred within 90 days of the onset of their own illness AND
 - o The exposed individual is recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms.

Section 2: Testing and quarantine response protocols

This section outlines testing and quarantine response protocols for individuals – students and staff – who test positive for COVID-19, close contacts who are not exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols, and symptomatic individuals. Each scenario outlines the duration of any quarantine or isolation, the conditions to be met in order for the individual to return to school, and any additional considerations.

Overview of Protocol Categories:

- Protocol A: For individuals who test positive for COVID-19
- Protocol B: Protocol for asymptomatic close contacts
- Protocol C: Protocol for symptomatic individuals

Protocol A for individuals who test positive

- Duration: Self-isolation for COVID-19 positive cases is a minimum of 5 days after symptom onset or after positive PCR or antigen test, if asymptomatic.
- Return to school: After 5 days and once they have:
 - o Been without fever for 24 hours (and without taking fever-reducing medications);and
 - o Experienced improvement in other symptoms; and
 - o Following the 5-day isolation period, individuals must mask for 5 additional days when around others, other than when eating, drinking, or **outside**.
- Note: Return to school should be based on time and symptom resolution. Even with a 5-day isolation period, repeat viral testing prior to return is not recommended.

Protocol B: Protocol for asymptomatic close contacts

LPS follows the updated testing guidance from DESE and DPH which includes the new option within the statewide testing program to offer weekly rapid at-home antigen tests to students and staff and discontinue contact tracing and Test and Stay programs. As such, individuals will no longer be identified as close contacts by school health professionals. However, individuals may

still be identified as close contacts outside of school settings (e.g. as a close contact of someone who tests positive for COVID-19 in their household).

In these cases:

- While in school settings (including for sports and extracurriculars), asymptomatic vaccinated individuals remain exempt from testing and quarantine protocols.
- If an asymptomatic, vaccinated individual is identified as a close contact outside of school, they may return to school. Individuals should closely monitor for symptoms and follow Protocol C if they experience symptoms listed in Section 1.
 - Unvaccinated individuals who are identified as close contacts outside of school settings should stay home and follow Protocol B below prior to returning to school.

Protocol B for asymptomatic, unvaccinated individuals identified as close contacts outside of school settings

- Duration: Quarantine is at least 5 days from the date of exposure
- Return to School: After 5 days, returning on day 6, provided that they:
 - o Remain asymptomatic,
 - o Adhere to strict mask use, other than when eating, drinking, or outside, and conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 10; and,
 - o Self-isolate if symptoms develop.
- Note: If an individual has symptoms at the time they are designated as a close contact or within the 5 days following initial exposure, they should follow the protocol for symptomatic individuals (Protocol C). If an individual tests positive at any time, they follow the protocol for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 (Protocol A). For all those exposed, best practice would also include a viral test (antigen or PCR) for COVID19 at day 5 after exposure. An antigen test may be self-administered and does not need to be proctored or performed by a healthcare professional.

Protocol C: Protocol for symptomatic individuals

Protocol C applies to vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals who experience the COVID-19 symptoms listed in Section 1 and who have not tested positive for COVID-19.

Protocol C for symptomatic individuals:

Duration: Dependent on symptom resolution

- Return to School: Individuals may return to school after they:
 - o Have improvement in symptoms
 - o Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
 - o It is also recommended that individuals receive a negative PCR or antigen test result for COVID-19. An antigen test may be self-administered and does not need to be proctored or performed by a healthcare professional. Note: So long as the individual is not a close contact, if a medical professional makes an alternative diagnosis for the COVID-19-like symptoms, the individual may use this recommendation (e.g., for influenza or strep pharyngitis) in lieu of a PCR test or antigen test.

- Please note: If an individual has mild symptoms, the individual may be considered for testing using BinaxNOW, if available.

- o If the result is positive, they should be sent home and follow Protocol A.

- o If the result is negative, they should remain in school.