



## LEARNING PREP SCHOOL

1507 WASHINGTON STREET, WEST NEWTON, MA 02465  
617.965.0764 | LEARNINGPREP.ORG

# COVID Protocols for School Year 2021-2022

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.

### **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 6-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. Please be in contact with Nancy Ishkanian, our school nurse, at [nishkanian@learningprep.org](mailto:nishkanian@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 will be following the most updated DESE/DPH guidance regarding close contacts and responding to COVID scenarios as outlined below. Please also see the following flow chart which summarizes these protocols.

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/flowcharts.pdf>

## Section 1

### **COVID-19 symptoms**

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves.

Unvaccinated individuals and any close contacts presenting these symptoms should follow

testing and quarantine response protocols as outlined in Section 2 of this document.

Vaccinated individuals who are not close contacts should follow the testing and quarantine response protocols if they are experiencing symptoms in bold. These individuals may also seek clinical guidance to assess the need for PCR testing if they have other symptoms on this list.

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: Recommended 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 recommended 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 10 days after symptom onset or after positive PCR or antigen test, if asymptomatic.
- Return to school: After 10 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 Individuals who do not meet these criteria after 10 days may receive clearance from either public health authority contact tracers (the local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative) or school health professional before returning to school.
- Note: Return to school should be based on time and symptom resolution. Repeat testing prior to return is not recommended.

### **Protocol B: Protocol for asymptomatic close contacts**

Close contacts who are not exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols and are asymptomatic follow the guidelines in Protocol B below. Please recall that all asymptomatic, fully vaccinated individuals are exempt from close contact testing and quarantine response protocols and therefore do not need to follow Protocol B. However, fully vaccinated individuals are expected to monitor for symptoms and stay home and get tested if they experience symptoms, in alignment with statewide guidance and Protocol C.

Note: In some cases, individuals may be asked to follow specific testing and quarantine response protocols (including durations for quarantine/isolation) provided by contact tracers or local health officials which may differ from the recommended protocols below.

### Protocol B for asymptomatic close contacts who are not exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols

LPS is utilizing the new Test and Stay (B-1) protocol option to minimize the amount of time individuals are out of school. This testing and quarantine response protocol has been shown to be generally equivalent to quarantine for school-based contacts, and a safe alternative to at-home isolation. For students who are not vaccinated, individuals follow the traditional quarantine (B-2) protocol. For students whom LPS does not have consent to test, follow the B-3 protocol.

Individuals who are part of the Test and Stay protocols may be eligible to participate in school sports and extracurricular activities, provided that they are in compliance with the applicable protocol. As part of Test and Stay, quarantine is still strongly recommended for individuals outside of school settings.

### Protocol B-1 (Recommended): Test and Stay

- Duration of Test and Stay: 7 days from the date of exposure
- Return to School: Close contacts can remain in school and do not have to quarantine, as long as they:
  - o Are asymptomatic
  - o Wear masks in school at all times, other than when eating or drinking. When these individuals cannot be masked (i.e., when eating or drinking) they should maintain 3 feet of distance from other individuals to the extent feasible.
  - o Take a rapid antigen test (e.g., BinaxNOW) on each school day and receive a negative result. When the 7 days from date of exposure includes weekends or holidays, individuals should quarantine on weekends, and if they remain asymptomatic, upon return to school be tested immediately. If the individual remains negative, they can stay in school.
  - o Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14, and self-isolate at home if symptoms develop.
- Note: If an individual has symptoms at the time they are designated as a close contact or develops symptoms during the Test and Stay period or the 14 days following initial exposure, they should follow the protocol for symptomatic individuals (Protocol C). If an individual tests positive at any time, they should follow the protocol for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 (Protocol A).

### Protocol B-2: Traditional protocol (if school does not have access to rapid daily testing or family or adult individual chooses not to participate in Test and Stay)

- Duration: Quarantine is at least 7 days from the date of exposure
- Return to School: After 7 days, returning on day 8, provided that they:
  - o Remain asymptomatic
  - o Receive a COVID test (PCR or rapid antigen) on day 5 or later and receive a negative result
  - o Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14, and self-isolate if

symptoms develop.

- Note: If an individual has symptoms at the time they are designated as a close contact or within the 14 days following initial exposure, they 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).

#### Protocol B-3: Alternate protocol for those who choose not to receive a COVID test

- Duration: Quarantine is at least 10 days from the date of exposure
- Return to School: After 10 days, returning on day 11, provided that they:
  - o Have not experienced symptoms up to this point
  - o Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14 and self-isolate if symptoms develop.
- Note: If an individual has symptoms at the time they are designated as a close contact or within the 14 days following initial exposure, they 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).

#### Protocol C: Protocol for symptomatic individuals

Protocol C applies to vaccinated and non-vaccinated individuals who experience the COVID19 symptoms listed in Section 1 applicable to their status.

#### Protocol C for symptomatic individuals:

Protocol C-1 (Recommended): Return to school post-symptoms with test

- Duration: Dependent on symptom resolution
- Return to School: Individuals may return to school after they:
  - o Have received a negative PCR test result for COVID-19. 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.
  - o Have improvement in symptoms
  - o Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Note: If the symptomatic individual was a close contact who is not exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols, after symptoms resolve and they receive a negative PCR test, they should follow Protocol B-1 for Test and Stay.
  - o If Test and Stay is not available or the family or adult individual opts not to participate, they follow Protocol B-2 or B-3.

#### Protocol C-2: Alternative protocol for symptomatic individuals who are not close contacts and choose not to receive a COVID test to return to school

- Duration: Isolation is at least 10 days from symptom onset
- Return to School: After 10 days, returning on day 11, assuming they:
  - o Have improvement in symptoms
  - o Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing

medication.