



Mr. Thomas J. Colabufo
Superintendent

January 13, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Many of you may have read articles or headlines indicating that the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the local health departments have stopped contact tracing. While that may be true, the Central Square School District has NOT stopped contact tracing, not because we have a choice whether we want to continue or not, the NYSDOH is requiring it. The current spike of COVID-19 positive cases does present a significant challenge to school districts, but we continue to contact trace based on all the parameters the NYSDOH **requires** us to follow. It is a team effort that involves administrators, nurses, our COVID Coordinator, transportation, teachers, coaches and many other staff members from all other units who share in the collective goal to maintain in-person learning and extra-curricular opportunities for students in the safest possible way.

In spite of this team approach, there may be times that, based on the significant number of cases, you are aware of your student being a close contact to someone that is COVID-19 positive, and we are not. If that should happen, every person has the right to fill out a self-attestation form for quarantine (click [here FOR OSWEGO COUNTY'S](#) form if you reside in Oswego County, and click [here FOR ONONDAGA COUNTY'S](#) form if you reside in Onondaga County). If you complete this form and send it to your child's school nurse, the time out from school will not be recorded as an absence and the District will be informed that your child met the NYSDOH Quarantine Guidelines and is deemed a "close contact" and will receive remote instruction throughout the child's quarantine.

The numerous NYSDOH and local health department requirements require a tremendous amount of work to be done by the school districts, and those requirements on school districts have unfortunately not gone away.

This includes:

- Weekly asymptomatic testing of all unvaccinated staff members (currently 80) and every test result must be entered individually in the state system called ECLRS. **(NY STATE MANDATED)**
- Contact tracing of positive cases inside the school setting and on school buses. **(NY STATE MANDATED)**
- Tracking of 90-day immunity windows for all students and staff that tested positive so they are not quarantined/isolated twice during their 90 days of COVID-19 immunity, as per the NYSDOH (vaccination status based on the frequently revised definitions of "fully vaccinated." **(NY STATE MANDATED)**
- Daily reporting of every positive case to NY State based on each school in the District, and reporting students, teachers and staff in the NYS COVID-19 State Reporting Portal. **(NY STATE MANDATED)**
- Offering COVID-19 testing to all symptomatic students and staff (ONLY if parents provide the school nurse with their parental consent. If the parent does not provide their consent for our nurses to test their symptomatic child, the parent must pick the child up at school and get their child a COVID-19 test at an approved testing facility, as negative at-home tests cannot be accepted for symptomatic students/staff, as per the NYSDOH requirements). We provide this testing throughout the school week in all six schools and on Sundays at PVM HS from 2pm-4pm. Last week we administered over 300 COVID-19 tests to symptomatic students and staff. **(OPTIONAL SERVICE FOR OUR FAMILIES)**
- Every test result in the District must be entered individually in the State Reporting System (ECLRS). **(NY STATE MANDATED)**

While we completely recognize your frustration as the NYSDOH continues to change their requirements/mandates that NY State schools must follow, we want all parents/guardians to know that our ENTIRE staff remain dedicated to preserve in-person learning and extra-curricular activities for our students. COVID-19 is unfortunately something we were forced to navigate through, but we owe it to our students to provide them a school experience that is as close to normal as we possibly can.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Colabufo - Superintendent