COVID-19 FAQ (Unvaccinated/Partially Vaccinated)

DEFINITION:

Unvaccinated/Partially Vaccinated
- Anyone not 2 weeks beyond their final vaccine dose
- **Please note:** If your unvaccinated student has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days, then they are treated as if they were fully vaccinated and boosted for the purposes of isolating and quarantining.

To be considered FULLY vaccinated, you must meet the following requirements:

Fully Vaccinated
Per the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the CDC, people are considered fully vaccinated:
- **2 weeks after** their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- **2 weeks after** a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine
- People who received a two-dose vaccine or combination of vaccines authorized by the World Health Organization are also fully vaccinated.

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*Updated as of May 11, 2022*
If you are UNVACCINATED or PARTIALLY VACCINATED against COVID-19...

DEFINITIONS

**Isolation**

Isolation applies to individuals with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status. It involves the diagnosed person having no interaction with other members of the household. The person must have their own bathroom and a door to their quarters. Meals are delivered to the room. This is difficult in a private residence and may be impossible if the person in isolation is a young child.

Day 0 is the first day of symptoms or the date of the positive test taken for an asymptomatic person. Day 1 is the first full day after symptoms developed or the test specimen was collected.

If symptoms persist, further isolation is required; otherwise, unvaccinated or partially vaccinated individuals may attend school after a 5-day isolation period if they receive a negative antigen test result on Day 5. They must wear a well-fitting mask (KN95 or KF94) for Days 6 - 10 when in the school building and when traveling on a school bus. The school will ensure adequate distancing of people who attend school following isolation (Days 6 - 10) during times when they may typically remove masks indoors, such as at lunch.

**Quarantine**

Quarantine applies to individuals exposed to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. It is a strategy used to prevent transmission of COVID-19 by keeping people who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 apart from others.

People in quarantine feel well but may be pre-symptomatic. A person in quarantine must monitor themselves closely to determine if they have developed symptoms of COVID-19. The person must have their own bathroom or clean the bathroom between each use. They must sleep in a separate room from anyone not in quarantine, in case symptoms develop at night. If they develop symptoms, they must be tested and start an isolation period.

An unvaccinated contact can participate in the school’s Test to Stay (TTS) program so that they can remain in school after being exposed to someone with COVID-19, rather than quarantine at home. Please refer to the TTS policy [here](#).
If they opt out of TTS, then they must quarantine at home for 5 days after their date of last contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Remote learning will be available to those who opt out of TTS for the first 5 days after their last date of exposure. Students are required to test negative on Day 5 or later and be asymptomatic to return to school. They may return to school on Day 6 if asymptomatic and negative and are able to consistently wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days. We will inform contacts of the appropriate test and return dates.

Families who choose not to test at Day 5 must complete a 10-day quarantine. Remote learning will be available for the first 5 days of quarantine. Asynchronous learning will be available for Days 6–10. This means that students in quarantine would be counted as present for attendance purposes but would access lessons and assignments through Google Classroom. Zoom access to classes will not be granted after the first 5 days.

If a student has ongoing contact with a case during their isolation period, such as a parent or sibling, they cannot participate in the TTS program and must quarantine until the case’s isolation period has ended. Once the case has been cleared from isolation, the student can participate in TTS and test the morning of their return to school and then on Day 5 after the case’s isolation ended or the first morning coming to school after Day 5.

**Infectious Period**
The infectious period is when someone with COVID-19 may potentially spread the virus to others.

- The start date of the infectious period is two days before the person had their first symptom or two days before their positive COVID-19 test date if they did not have symptoms.
- The test date is the date when the sample for the test was taken, not the date when the test results were reported to the provider or patient.

**Close Contact**
In NYC, a close contact can be identified in the following two ways, and the school may choose which type of contact tracing to perform:

1. **Group Level Contact Tracing:** Any individual in the same enclosed space (such as a classroom or school bus) for at least 15 minutes with someone who has COVID-19
2. **Individual Level Contact Tracing:** An individual who has been within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19, for a total of 15 or more minutes over a 24-hour period, regardless of face mask use or the presence of plexiglass or other
barriers. This can be from two days before the person with COVID-19’s symptoms began (or if they have no symptoms, two days before they tested positive).

Exception: Per NYSDOH guidance, in the indoor classroom setting or a structured outdoor setting when mask use can be observed, students sitting 3 to 6 feet from a student with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they and the student with COVID-19 wore masks correctly and consistently. This exception applies only to students and not to staff. It also does not apply when students are unmasked.

Other people may be considered close contacts in certain situations, such as when physical distancing cannot be consistently monitored or maintained (such as on the school bus, younger children who are unable to remain 6 feet apart and wear masks, and during some sports and recreational activities).

**SYMPTOM/ILLNESS POLICY**

Regardless of your vaccination status ALL students and faculty/staff:

- **Who have one or more of the following symptoms of COVID-19 should be excluded from school, isolate, and seek testing.** They may get any type of COVID-19 viral test, molecular test (such as a PCR), provider-based antigen test, or at-home test. If using at-home tests, two negative at-home tests taken at least 24 hours apart are required to end isolation.
  - Fever (100 F)
  - New cough
  - Congestion
  - Sore throat
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Vomiting or Diarrhea

- **Monitor for the following symptoms.** If these symptoms do not resolve within 24 hours, take a test:
  - Headache
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle aches
  - Abdominal pain/upset stomach

To return to school, ALL students and faculty/staff:
Must get tested. This may be any type of COVID-19 viral test, molecular test (such as a PCR), provider-based antigen test, or at-home test. If using at-home tests, two negative at-home tests taken at least 24 hours apart are required to end isolation.

- All student results must be sent to studentcovidresults@gatewayschool.org for clearance.
- All staff results must be sent to covidresults@gatewayschool.org for clearance.
- Please bring a printed copy of your test for the Arrivals Team.

Students and faculty/staff with a negative test result may return to school when all of the following apply: they have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, at least 24 hours after any episode of vomiting or diarrhea, when feeling better, and when able to tolerate masking.

NYS TESTING REQUIREMENT FOR UNVACCINATED

- P-12 schools are required to offer screening testing to unvaccinated students on a weekly basis in geographic areas identified by the CDC as having moderate, substantial, or high transmission rates. Parent/guardian consent is required for testing a student at school.

WHAT TO DO IF I TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

- Families and faculty/staff are required to report a COVID-19 positive test result immediately to the School’s Nurse, Lucy Khong, RN, BSN, so they can evaluate the matter and determine next steps.
- If identified as COVID-19 positive, the individual must stay home in accordance with the latest quarantine and isolation guidance from the Department of Health. Please refer to the Isolation Table link below.
- Isolation policy is as follows:
  - If the individual is asymptomatic, they must isolate for 5 days from the date of their first positive COVID-19 test (assuming they do not develop symptoms during such period). They can end isolation after 5 days if they do not have symptoms, including no fever in the past 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine, they receive a negative test result, and they are able to wear a well-fitting mask. Otherwise, isolation should continue.
  - If the individual is symptomatic, they must isolate for a minimum of 5 days from the date they developed symptoms. They can end isolation
after 5 days if they no longer have symptoms or their symptoms are improving, they have not had a fever in the past 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine, they receive a negative test result, and they are able to wear a well-fitting mask. Otherwise, isolation should continue.

○ They must wear a well-fitting mask around others and follow key prevention measures for 10 days. These include distancing from others when taking off a mask to eat lunch.

● Students and faculty/staff having tested positive for COVID-19 will not be required to participate in any surveillance or screening testing for the 90 day period following their positive test result.

● Students and faculty/staff having tested positive for COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine after an exposure for the 90 day period unless they are experiencing any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed in the Symptom/Illness Policy section.

Click here for the Isolation Table for Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated Individuals.

WHAT TO DO IF I HAVE A COVID-19 EXPOSURE

● Families, faculty, and staff are required to report any known COVID-19 exposure immediately to the School’s Nurse, Lucy Khong RN, BSN, so they can evaluate the matter and determine next steps. Depending on vaccination status and circumstances of the exposure (was it a household exposure as an example), the affected individual could be cleared to come to the school building or may be directed to quarantine and test.

● Families and faculty/staff will be notified by the school of any in-school exposures and will be directed as to the proper quarantine and testing measures. Individuals may be contacted by the school’s Contact Tracing Team.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM A CLOSE CONTACT (TEST TO STAY AND QUARANTINE POLICY)

If you have a known COVID exposure or have been deemed a close contact, you will be directed to follow one of the steps outlined in the table below.

Click here for the Quarantine Table.
Next Steps:

**Unvaccinated/Partially Vaccinated**
- Unvaccinated students can participate in the school’s Test to Stay (TTS) program so that they can remain in school after being exposed to someone with COVID-19, rather than quarantine at home. They are able to attend school and applicable school-based extracurricular activities by testing negative through serial testing using rapid NAAT or antigen tests (including at-home) during a five-day period following exposure. The school can provide at-home antigen tests for this purpose. Please refer to the TTS policy here.

- Any unvaccinated student opting out of TTS will be required to quarantine at home for 5 days after their date of last contact with the COVID positive individual. They must continue to monitor closely for symptoms for 10 days. Remote learning will be available the first 5 days of quarantine. Students opting out of TTS are required to test negative on Day 5 or later and be asymptomatic to return to school. They may return to school on Day 6 if asymptomatic and negative and are able to consistently wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days. We will inform contacts of the appropriate test and return dates.
  - Please send negative COVID results to studentcovidresults@gatewayschool.org and bring printed copies of negative COVID results to school on your first day back.

- Any unvaccinated student may choose to complete the full quarantine at home for 10 days after their last date of contact with the COVID positive individual. Remote learning will be available the first 5 days of quarantine. Asynchronous learning will be available Days 6-10. This means that students in quarantine would be counted as present for attendance purposes but would access lessons and assignments through Google Classroom.

**Siblings/Household Members of Exposed Students/Staff**
- Unvaccinated/Partially Vaccinated Primary Contact
  - Siblings and household members of unvaccinated close contacts may continue to attend school UNLESS the primary contact develops ANY symptoms and is required to quarantine and test.
  - Families must separate the quarantined individual to the best of their ability at home.
○ If the primary contact develops ANY symptoms during quarantine, the sibling must quarantine at home or contact the nurse immediately for the TTS schedule.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF AN INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS WHILE IN SCHOOL?**

If an individual experiences COVID-19 related symptoms while in school, they must report to the Nurse’s Office immediately for evaluation. Faculty receive training from the nurse in order to identify pediatric symptoms of COVID-19. Any student exhibiting those symptoms will be taken immediately to the nurse. The symptomatic student and any adult accompanying them to the Nurse’s Office must wear a well-fitting mask over their nose and mouth during this period.

Any employee who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms or exposure at school will immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.

If your child develops any symptoms of COVID-19 at school, as defined by the CDC, they will be evaluated by the school nurse, placed in an isolation room, and a parent/guardian will be called to pick them up. Young students and students requiring ongoing nursing care will be accompanied into isolation by a nurse or trained administrator. Older students will be visually monitored by a nurse or administrator while in isolation.

Any student sent home with COVID-like-symptoms must have the following to return to school:

- **A negative test result.** This may be any type of COVID-19 viral test, molecular test (such as a PCR), provider-based antigen test, or at-home test. If using at-home tests, two negative at-home tests taken at least 24 hours apart are required to end isolation.
- At least 24 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medication.
- Symptom improvement and the ability to self-manage any lingering symptoms in school.

If a student is not tested for COVID-19, they must stay home and isolate (as if they were positive) for 5 days after the onset of symptoms. The school will treat them as a positive individual and inform those deemed close contacts from the preceding 2 days. They will be required to follow the steps listed above plus wear a well-fitting mask at school through Day 10.
For siblings where one is considered a close contact of a positive case, the other sibling will be able to attend school in person only if they are able to remain fully separated during the quarantine period. This would require that the close contact is in a separate room from the other sibling at all times during this period. If this is not possible, then the unvaccinated/partially vaccinated sibling can remain in school via the TTS program until the close contact sibling is cleared to return to school.

For siblings where one has tested positive, the unvaccinated/partially vaccinated student may attend school in person only if the family confirms that they can remain fully separated from the positive sibling/family member and they participate in TTS. If they are not able to remain fully separated from the positive sibling during their isolation period, then the unvaccinated/partially vaccinated exposed student must quarantine and begin the TTS program only after the COVID-19 positive individual completes their isolation.

**MASK POLICY**

- **Mask Optional:** In accordance with guidance from the NYS Health Commissioner and NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the school has moved to a mask optional policy.
- The school encourages all community members to be respectful to others whether they choose to wear a mask or not.
- Per NYS and NYC, there are times when masks are still required or recommended even if the school has moved to a mask optional policy. They are listed in bold below:
  - **Students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear a mask when:**
    - Returning to school from a 5-day isolation period due to COVID-19, during Days 6 through 10, including when traveling on a school bus
    - Entering the school’s Nurse’s Office
    - They have symptoms of COVID-19 at school
  - **Students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, are strongly recommended to wear a mask when:**
    - They were exposed to someone with COVID-19, whether the exposure occurred in school or outside of school. The person should wear a mask for 10 days after their last day of exposure.
- They are moderately-to-severely immunocompromised, and masking is recommended by their healthcare provider.

- **Students, teachers, and staff, regardless of vaccination status, may choose to wear a mask at all times or in specific circumstances, such as when:**
  - Traveling on school buses
  - They feel more comfortable wearing a mask, such as for personal health reasons, because they are not vaccinated, or they live with someone at higher risk for severe COVID-19

- Masks are optional for students and transportation personnel when traveling on school buses. Windows should be open, weather permitting. Students who rode on a bus with a student or bus staff who tests positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine as long as they do not develop symptoms. All students, faculty, and staff are required to wear fitted face coverings over their nose and mouth at all times while indoors on school property and on trips. They may be removed indoors when actively eating, drinking, or for scheduled mask breaks.

- Universal masking requirements may be reinstated based on NYC’s COVID-19 Alert Levels, which are based on current level of community transmission as defined by the CDC and health care capacity. The school’s current plan includes an option for mask-less play outdoors, based upon the latest guidance and current conditions.

- Disposable masks, including KN95s and KF94s, are available on site, if needed.

**TRAVEL**

While we are not monitoring the Gateway community’s travel plans, we do ask that you follow CDC guidance around travel [here](#). We also ask that you consider the impact your travel may have on the larger Gateway community, particularly if you have an unvaccinated or partially vaccinated child.

**TESTING AFTER AN EXTENDED BREAK**

The school will communicate any return-to-school requirements with families and employees before an extended school break. If the school determines that testing is required following a holiday or other extended school break, all students (except those who are exempt due to having tested positive for COVID-19 within 90 days of the return) will need to present a negative COVID-19 test to designated members of our Arrivals Team, regardless of the child’s vaccination status, before being cleared to attend
school. For students arriving with no test result and not listed as exempt, families will be contacted and directed to pick up their child and take them for testing before returning to school.

Additionally, the school may require Mirimus pooled testing the week following a holiday break. Testing kits will be sent home in your child’s backpack on the designated day and must be returned the following morning for submission to the testing lab.

**Acceptable tests:**
Guidance may differ based on updated information from the CDC and NYS/NYC Departments of Health, so please refer to the specific communications for each return to the school building.

**In most circumstances:**
- PCR tests must be taken within 72 hours of the return to the school building after a break.
- Rapid PCR, provider-performed rapid antigens or at-home rapid antigens must be taken within 24 hours of the return to the school building after a break.