

COVID MEETING WITH DR. EMANUEL
November 3, 2021
(Via Zoom, Nancy Fincke, Mara Rus, Emily Drazen and Amy
Funkenstein present)

This meeting and others going forward we will review the below list of our Covid policies. When change is recommended it will be brought to Steering for consideration and approval. This new approach is to increase efficiency of our meetings and to ensure we are regularly and thoroughly reviewing our Covid policies. Our goal is to meet monthly with Dr. Emanuel.

- 1 Attestation: Parents/caregivers will be required to attest to their child's health each school day through Jovial.

No change recommended. Thanksgiving a high risk time.

- 2 Return to School for Symptomatic LNS Students: All LNS students who develop symptoms of COVID (see below) should get a PCR or rapid molecular COVID test. Students can return to school once they have a negative test, AND are fever free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications, AND other symptoms are improving.

Symptom List:

- fever (100.4 and higher), feverish, chills
- cough (not due to other known causes (e.g. diagnosed/known seasonal allergies or asthma)
- sore throat
- difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- congestion
- muscle aches or body aches
- new loss of taste or smell
- nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea)
- rash on hands and feet
- headache (in combination with other symptoms)
- fatigue (in combination with other symptoms)
- runny nose (in combination with other symptoms)

No change recommended.

- 3 Return to School for LNS Students with Symptomatic Household Member: If an LNS student has an unvaccinated household member with the above symptoms, keep the LNS student home (even if that child is asymptomatic) until the household member has a negative COVID test (PCR or rapid molecular).

No change recommended.

- 4 Return to School for LNS Students Deemed Close Contacts/Exposed to COVID: If an LNS student is exposed to COVID they must stay out of school for 7 days from the date of exposure (the day of exposure is day 0). They must take a PCR or rapid molecular test on day 5+ post exposure. If the test is negative, and the student remains symptom free, they may return to school on Day 8

No change recommended.

- 5 Return to School for LNS Students with Close Contact in the Household: If an LNS student has an unvaccinated household member who has been exposed to COVID, keep the LNS student home until that household member has received a negative COVID test (PCR or rapid molecular) 5 days after the exposure (the day of exposure is Day 0).

We proposed the below policy change which echoes that from another local preschool. Dr. Emanuel supported this suggested policy change.

NEW/UPDATED POLICY

The LNS student may remain in school if the close contact:

- a) is asymptomatic AND***
- b) takes a BinaxNow rapid antigen test, receives a negative result, and shares that negative result with the Director each morning before the LNS student comes to school through Day 7. (The day of exposure is Day 0.)***

If the close contact becomes symptomatic or receives a positive BinaxNow antigen test, the LNS student must stay home. In those cases, the close contact must take a PCR or rapid molecular test:

- If a negative PCR test result is received, the LNS student may return to school. The close contact must continue to take and report negative BinaxNow test results each morning before the LNS student comes to school through Day 7.***
- If a positive test result is received, the current close contact policy applies to the LNS student.***

RATIONALE

This policy will allow students with a household member who is designated a “close contact” to participate in school with minimal risk of bringing Covid into the classroom. It will apply to all household contacts, including but not limited to siblings who are in a Test & Stay program in the public school system.

Note that the negative antigen test result must be received and shared with the Director in the morning before the LNS student may come to school. Therefore, families with a close contact in the Test & Stay program must wait to receive notification from the school nurse of that day’s test result before dropping off the LNS student, or purchase their own BinaxNow tests to use earlier in the morning.

The BinaxNow test is specified in accordance with the Test & Stay policies of the MA Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education.

- 6 Masking: We will require masks of everyone over the age of 2 in both indoor and outdoor settings at LNS. This change is made so we may allow children to play normally outdoors without a concern for distance. With one year of practice, we know that children are resilient and capable of such accommodations and will continue to thrive at school. In addition, please keep in mind that masking is required of us all (vaccinated or unvaccinated) during pick-up and drop-off when physical distancing is not possible.

We shared some new data that are weighted by town. (Show data via screen share). Case counts per 100,000 in the towns that LNS draws from are averaging below the threshold of 10 cases per 100,000 people. Dr. Emanuel supported making masking optional while outdoors for all children and adults regardless of vaccination status.

- 7 Family Partners: This year family partnering is **voluntary**. All family partners must be fully vaccinated, must wear N95 mask, must take rapid COVID antigen test the morning of family partnering, and must complete the health status attestation form.

We had a question from the community about unvaccinated parent helping and testing with PCR. Dr. Emanuel recommended no change to the policy. He said (paraphrased): "Let's say today is Monday and I take a PCR test on Monday. That's really reflecting an exposure last Thursday/Friday. I could have been exposed on Saturday, still negative on PCR Monday but be contagious if family partnering on Tuesday or Wednesday."

The only change is that family partners are no longer required to mask outdoors (see above).

- 8 Return to School for LNS Students after Travel: All unvaccinated students who travel must provide negative PCR or rapid molecular test taken after returning to MA. This does not apply to students who have no new significant exposures during travel (for example, travelling by car to a family house in NH, staying with people who are vaccinated or within their current bubble or household).

No change recommended. Be careful around Thanksgiving.

- 9 Cohorts: Cohorts will be maintained during school hours and for extended day programming. Vaccinated teachers and staff may move between cohorts as needed.

No change recommended.

On November 5, 2021 Dr. Emanuel clarified further his recommendation on our family partnering policy:

“We want to minimize the risk that any adults entering LNS classrooms and working closely with students will inadvertently transmit COVID within the classroom, especially given that many students remain unvaccinated. The best way to minimize this risk is to have a multi-layered mitigation strategy: 1) vaccination (decreasing risk of infection), 2) testing (decreasing risk of transmission), 3) indoor masking (decreasing risk of transmission) and 4) air filtration/outdoor time (decreasing risk of transmission). Testing (PCR, rapid molecular, and rapid antigen) are all a point in time and do not take the place of other mitigation strategies (vaccination, indoor masking, air filtration).”