

COVID MEETING WITH DR. EMANUEL

December 6, 2021

(Nancy Fincke, Emily Drazen, Amy Funkenstein, Mara Rus, Kate Brooks, and Emily Lines present)

We met via zoom to review current LNS covid policies, post-holiday testing, and questions submitted by a parent.

Current Policies:

- (1) Attestation: **no change**
- (2) Return to school (RTS) symptomatic student: **no change**
- (3) RTS student with symptomatic household member: **no change**
- (4) RTS student who is close contact / exposed: **no change**
 - (a) We will review this policy as it pertains to fully vaccinated students in January.
- (5) RTS student with close contact in household: **no change**
- (6) Masking: **Recommends reinstating masking outdoor policy, while allowing for outdoor mask breaks as needed.**
- (7) Family partnering: **no change**
- (8) Travel policy: **Recommends “gateway testing” for return to school on January 3.**
 - (a) For those who have traveled: Negative PCR within 48 hours of return.
 - (b) For those who have not traveled: Negative at-home antigen on morning of return.

Additional topics discussed:

- Given (1) the recent uptick in cases, (2) that we know very little about the transmissibility and severity of the Omicron variant, and (3) that we’re in the holiday season, Dr. Emanuel recommends we **exercise more caution as a school.**
 - Ensure all teachers have received booster shot
 - Ensure all teachers wear N95 masks
 - “Gateway testing” for return to school in January (see above)
 - Reinstating outdoor masking policy, while allowing for mask breaks as needed.
 - Recommending families consider rapid antigen testing prior to unmasked, indoor gatherings over the holiday season.

Questions from parent:

Question 1: In general, when recommending Covid policy for LNS, how do you weigh costs and benefits? (ie some Covid policies come at a cost, how is this weighed?)

Answer 1: His priorities are:

- Avoiding students and teachers getting covid and spreading it to others
- Considering that closing down studios impacts many: children, families, teachers, and beyond

Question 2: What research supports the need for young children to mask or distance, while outdoors?

Answer 2: One problem that's become clear is that kids are a transmission vehicle. Being outdoors reduces risk of transmission but doesn't eliminate it if you're in close proximity and breathing in each others' faces. Covid is transmitted through aerosolized droplets. Kids breathe into each others' faces. The closer you are to others, even outside, the more likely you are to transmit disease.

Question 3: Why are we still asking families to complete a daily attestation form? What are the benefits? Is there research to support that attestation forms are effective at reducing the spread of Covid?

Answer 3: They haven't been studied. They prompt people to review their symptoms and to be honest about them. Other people are depending upon each person being careful. If you have a symptom, it's a reminder to go get tested.

Question 4: What is the "rationale" for this change?

- i. **New Protocol:** We require students to stay home only if an Unvaccinated household member has COVID Symptoms. Vaccinated household members with COVID symptoms should still get a COVID test, but the LNS student does not need to stay home while awaiting results.
- ii. **Old Protocol:** We require students to stay home if anyone in the household (vaccinated or unvaccinated) has COVID symptoms until that household member has a negative test (PCR or rapid molecular)

Answer 4: One of the things about a test positivity rate is that you may have symptoms but they may not be related to Covid. The likelihood for a negative test goes up 6 fold if you're vaccinated. Likelihood of symptoms being the result of Covid is dramatically less for the vaccinated.