

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Last Updated Sunday, February 13, 2022**

On Friday, February 11, 2022, the Oak Grove School Board of Education convened in a Special Meeting to discuss the implementation of our health mitigations in light of the recent Circuit Court ruling (Austin v. Pritzker) on February 4. The Board weighed its options around the continued enforcement of three mandates currently identified in the Governor's Executive Order and public health guidance stipulated by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health. After discussion and consideration of the entire community's interests, the Board reached consensus to discontinue the enforcement of the three mandates listed below:

- **Mandatory Masks in Schools**
- **Mandatory Exclusion/Quarantine of Close Contacts from In-Person Learning**
- **Mandatory Weekly COVID-19 Testing for Unvaccinated School Personnel**

Beginning Monday, February 14, OGS administration will adjust its mitigations to align with this decision. In addition to previous communication shared with families, administration has created an FAQ document (below) to bring greater clarity to recent changes. Administration will continue to add questions to this document as they receive questions from the community.

### **POSITIVE CASE DETERMINATION AND COMMUNICATION**

**1. How will parents be notified when there are COVID-19 cases at school?**

Parents will receive notification that is in alignment to our communicable disease notifications. When a case (staff or student) occurs at a grade level, parents at that grade level will be notified within 24-48 hours.. No student or staff identifiable information will be shared. Communications will include the number of positive cases only.

**2. What happens if my child tests positive for COVID-19?**

If a symptomatic student tests positive at school (through voluntary rapid antigen testing) or through testing outside of the school, he/she will be required to isolate for a minimum of five days (as defined by IDPH/CDC guidelines). On days 6-10 and upon a return to school, the school encourages masking.

**3. Will staff or parents of students be notified when they are deemed a close contact at school?**

Yes. Close contacts at school will be notified by a school nurse. Close contacts are anyone under 3 feet at school (to a positive case) for 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period. A close contact will only be quarantined if they are symptomatic and test

positive for COVID-19. An asymptomatic student or staff member will be requested to monitor for symptoms and be encouraged to take a test for COVID-19.

**4. If my child tests positive or is identified as a close contact to a case at school, will he/she be able to stream into the classroom for remote learning?**

Remote learning was tied to the ISBE's mandate for quarantines. Since the Board approved to no longer quarantine close contacts, remote learning will no longer be an option. Instead, students will access their online portals to receive assignments. This restores pre-pandemic practices for addressing assignments when students are ill. Students that test positive must isolate and should focus on recovery.

**5. Does OGS have to notify the local health department when there are cases?**

The Lake County Health Department (LCHD) requests OGS nurses to report positive cases to them. However, the LCHD will only "contact trace" cases with OGS nurses when there is reason to believe there is an outbreak at school. The LCHD determines whether multiple cases within a school are deemed an outbreak and will guide OGS nurses on how to communicate this with families. Health officials will also guide administration on whether or not to move to an adaptive pause (remote learning) to address the outbreak.

**6. What happens if a student is exhibiting COVID-like symptoms at school?**

If a school nurse cannot rule out COVID-19 through consideration of a child's symptoms, the student will be sent home and is required to return with a negative test (rapid-antigen, home test or PCR test) to rule out COVID-19.

**MASKING**

**7. Who does the mask-optional protocol apply to?**

Every student, staff member and volunteer in the building have the option to personally decide whether to wear a mask. We are encouraging students/staff that return from a 5-day isolation for COVID-19 to wear a mask.

**8. Will masks be optional during extracurricular events, such as dances, clubs, extended-day, and athletics?**

Yes, masks will be optional during all extracurricular events. However, when students attend events at other host schools or organizations (such as "away" games), they are required to align to the protocols set by those schools or organizations.

**9. Are there any times when masks are required for students or staff?**

Yes. Masks are currently required on buses, whether during the commute to/from school or when students attend field trips. This is federal law. In addition, staff may be required to wear a mask when in the company of immunocompromised students (per student medical guidelines).

**OGS TESTING PROGRAMS**

**10. Will any of the OGS COVID-19 testing programs continue?**

Yes. Parents can still register for the school's weekly PCR testing program. This is voluntary for all students and staff members. In addition, OGS will continue its Diagnostic testing (rapid antigen) program. If a student becomes symptomatic at school, a nurse can administer a rapid antigen test per parent permission. A nurse will call the parent in advance to receive permission. If a parent declines and the nurses cannot rule out COVID-19, the student will be sent home and is required to return with a negative test or isolate for five days. A PCR, rapid antigen, or home-test will be accepted.

**11. Is the Test-to-Stay program still operating?**

No, the Test-to-Stay program is no longer in place at OGS since the school will not be requiring quarantines for asymptomatic close contacts at school.

**12. Are unvaccinated volunteers and staff required to submit to weekly COVID-19 testing?**

No. Unvaccinated are no longer required to test weekly since the Board's decision regarding this mandate.

**13. Do staff and volunteers need to show proof of vaccination?**

No. Staff and volunteers are no longer required to show proof of vaccination since the Board's decision regarding this mandate.

**OTHER OGS HEALTH MITIGATIONS**

**14. Will social distancing still take place at OGS?**

Yes. OGS will maintain a minimum of 6 feet social distance between students during lunchtime. In addition, classrooms will maintain the current (minimum) 3 feet social distance.

**15. What other mitigations will be in place at OGS?**

OGS will continue to meet guidelines from CDC for air flow and filtering within schools. In addition, deep cleaning and sanitation will take place daily. Finally, students will be asked to wash hands before eating.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**16. What if my child has anxiety about the recent adjustments to mitigations? Who can they speak to?**

If a child is concerned or anxious, we are encouraging them to speak with a trusted adult at school. Our teachers, social workers, and administrators are prepared to have these conversations and address a student's need as appropriate.

**17. What if my child is immunocompromised or has a special health accommodation?**

We request parents reach out to their child's case manager to collaborate around how best to meet the student's health needs going forward.

**18. What if my child experiences unwanted persuasion to wear or un-wear a mask?**

We ask that any student and/or family experiencing unwanted persuasion to tell a trusted adult at school. Teachers and administration are prepared to address these situations with students involved.