



## NEW PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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August 18, 2022

Dear Parents/ Guardians and Staff,

Welcome back to the 2022/2023 school year! I hope that summer has afforded you many opportunities for recreation and relaxation. We have been very busy this summer running programs and preparing for the upcoming school year, and now we are looking forward to our students and staff returning in the next couple of weeks. As we are approaching the new year, I want to provide you with our updates related to COVID from a health and safety perspective as well as from an instructional perspective.

In terms of health and safety, please note the following procedures for the upcoming school year:

1. We continue to encourage all students and staff to stay up-to-date with their vaccinations and continue to follow best practices. This year, we are pleased that all of our students are eligible to be vaccinated.
2. School-wide contact tracing continues to no longer be recommended.
3. Quarantine for exposure is no longer recommended provided the exposed individual remains asymptomatic.
4. If you are exposed and are not up-to-date with vaccinations, you should wear a mask for the next 10 days.
5. If you are symptomatic, please stay home and test. At home tests are permitted. You may return to school following two negative at home tests performed at least 24 hours apart or a negative laboratory test. A mask is not required upon return after a negative result.
6. Upon a positive test result, the individual must isolate and may return after five days from the onset of symptoms if the individual is fever free for 24 hours and symptoms have improved. The individual must continue to wear a well-fitted mask from day 6 through day 10.
7. Unvaccinated staff will no longer need to be tested on a weekly basis with the lifting of the Governor's Executive Order.
8. The district's COVID Dashboard will continue to be active, but general notification letters will no longer be disseminated. The Dashboard will be updated by the close of business on Fridays inclusive of the prior 7 days worth of activity.
9. Individuals who are more comfortable wearing masks every day or during certain periods of time should continue to do so. There will be no tolerance for individuals who make other individuals feel uncomfortable for wearing, or not wearing a mask.
10. We expect that all of our school constituents will follow the honor system with respect to the above-mentioned protocol. The district will not be monitoring each

individual's circumstances, but we do expect that you will report a positive COVID test to your school nurse.

In terms of instruction, the district will no longer provide remote access to our classrooms. Our rationale, which is based on best practices, and our experience is as follows:

1. If you are home sick, please rest and get well.
2. We are going to prioritize in-person instruction. Students learn best in-person.
3. Teachers are distracted by remote access and naturally want to assist their students at home impacting the in-person environment.
4. Families will seek other opportunities for remote instruction such as vacations, family events, etc.
5. The structure of school is critical to students' well-being.
6. There is serious concern for prolonged absences for other issues such as anxiety and depression with the use of remote access.
7. Teachers, as in the past, will continue to make sure that students make progress while out for whatever reason or duration.
8. We will continue to promote self-advocacy and resiliency.
9. The US Department of Education and CDC are prioritizing in-person instruction: "Data collected before and during COVID have shown that in-person learning, on the whole, leads to better academic outcomes, greater levels of student engagement, higher rates of attendance, and better social and emotional well-being, and ensures access to critical school services, and extracurricular activities when compared to remote learning."

Over the next several weeks, you will get additional information from your building principals and our school nurses regarding these matters. If you have any questions regarding a health-related matter, please continue to collaborate with our school nurses. If you have any instructional questions related to your child's absence due to COVID or any other illnesses, please contact your child's teacher.

I will share other opening information with you in my next correspondence. Thank you again for your continued support and patience, and we look forward to seeing you soon.

We anticipate a wonderful 2022/2023 school year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Miceli, Ed.D." The signature is written in a cursive style.

David M. Miceli, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools