



# BYRAM HILLS

## CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

10 TRIPP LANE ARMONK, NY 10504

October 31, 2020

To the Byram Hills School Community,

Happy Halloween to all Byram Hills students! I hope that everyone has the chance to celebrate safely with family. The squirrels ate all of my pumpkins.....

With the recent announcement of students and staff who need to quarantine, I thought it would be helpful to share the updated [Westchester County Department of Health Q&A](#) document shared with schools, which was updated on 10/28/20.

The following Q&A from the document is particularly helpful for our students and staff who are quarantining because they are COVID-19 positive, or because they are a contact of a positive case:

#### **Q4. How long will contacts to positive COVID-19 cases be required to quarantine?**

A. Individuals who are exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be required to quarantine for 14 days from the day they were last exposed. Please note that a negative test does not release an individual from quarantine.

#### **Q5. What resources will an isolating or quarantined person require?**

A. An isolating or quarantined person will need access to a private room and a private bathroom. Individuals will also need access to food, medications and other essential items that will allow them to remain in quarantine. People who need assistance during quarantine or isolation can call 866-588-0195.

#### **Q9. When can a person who has tested positive return to school? Is it the same process for students, faculty and staff?**

A. If the individual who tested positive has symptoms (Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing, Chills, Repeated Shaking with Chills, Muscle Pain, Headache, Sore Throat, or New Loss of Taste or Smell) the Clearance Criteria for release from isolation are: It's been at least 10 days since the individual first started experiencing symptoms; AND The individual hasn't had a fever in at least 3 days, without taking fever-reducing medication (such as Tylenol); AND Any shortness of breath/coughing/difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell has improved. If the individual who tested positive is asymptomatic the Clearance Criteria are: It's been at least 10 days since the person's first positive COVID-19 test was collected; AND The individual hasn't had any subsequent illness

#### **Q10. Can we assume that students with antibodies are safe from contracting COVID-19?**

A. No, we do not have enough information about whether antibodies protect individuals from re-infection and how long antibodies may provide protection. Antibody tests also CANNOT diagnose if an individual has active infectious COVID-19. A positive result can mean you had infection with COVID-19 in the past. A different test would be needed to determine active infection.



**Q11. Are rapid tests (Antigen or Molecular) reliable?**

A. Rapid tests provide results in under an hour, though they have a high rate of false negatives. Negative rapid antigen tests which are the most commonly performed rapid COVID-19 test cannot rule out COVID-19 and should be followed up by a molecular test.

**The guidance for Question 12 has been changed by Governor Cuomo today, 10/31/20 - and will be posted to the NYSDOH website soon. The new guidance provides the option for two different COVID-19 tests - before coming into NYS and a few days after- so that individuals do not have to quarantine for 14 days. Look out for the update.**

Q12. Do students coming back from vacation from states on Governor Cuomo's travel advisory need to quarantine?

A. Yes, students who are coming to New York from any of the states on the travel advisory need to quarantine for 14 days. The most up-to-date list of states is available here. (<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-traveladvisory#restricted-states>)

**Q13. What qualifies as an exposure to COVID-19?**

A. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a person displaying symptoms of or testing positive for COVID-19 for 10 minutes or longer. Close contacts will be required to quarantine. Proximate contact is defined as being in the same enclosed environment such as a classroom or office, but greater than 6 feet from a person displaying symptoms of or testing positive for COVID-19. WCDOH will determine if a proximate contact should be under quarantine.

**Q18. If a child tests positive and has a sibling in the school, should the school keep the sibling out of school?**

A. Yes, unless the siblings reside in separate households, the sibling must be placed on quarantine which would mean that the sibling should not attend school during the required period for quarantine.

If you still have questions about what it means to be quarantined, please call the Department of Health at: (866) 588-0195 and leave a message for a return call.

I hope that this is helpful to you. Thank you for your continued caution and safety, and my sincere apologies to students who are quarantining today.

Sincerely,

Jen Lamia, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools