



BYRAM HILLS

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

10 TRIPP LANE ARMONK, NY 10504

January 9, 2022

To the Byram Hills School Community,

I hope that your families are well. While we continue our work for the benefit of all students, I wanted to provide an update on the state of the Byram Hills Schools regarding COVID-19 to keep our families, faculty, staff, and administrators informed. I framed the update in the form of a Q&A and hope that this information is helpful. Please note an important District request about masks at the end of the update.

How do I find the COVID-19 cases in Byram Hills?

There are two ways to locate numbers of COVID-19 cases in our schools. The first way is on the [Byram Hills website](#), where you can access the total number of **cases that result in school quarantines**, by week. This is not the total number of cases reported to the District or the total number of cases reported through labs in the county. Why do we report these cases to the community? It is simply a reporting of the number of cases that may have affected school for our children and have subsequently exposed children or adults as contacts in the school setting. These numbers do not account for a lot. For example, during the week of January 6th we had one case resulting in one quarantine, but we had 21 positive antigen tests before we returned last week that did not result in quarantine (the tests that were distributed on Sunday, January 2, 2022). None of those positive cases affected students in school. Since those tests are not reported to the county (because they are antigen tests), they do not hit the county website either. Therefore, finding an accurate report of COVID cases is difficult. Let me offer another example - if a student stays home Wednesday and Thursday because another family member has COVID and then takes a positive test Friday, that student would not affect any other students from attending and would not be reported on the school site. If the student took a PCR, they would be reported on the County website by the school and by the lab, but if they took an antigen, they would not be reported in either place. All of the possible scenarios considered, I cannot ascertain a way that anyone could have an accurate account of cases. Why do we continue to report the positive cases requiring quarantines on the website? We want the community to know what cases have resulted in a disruption to our student learning.

The second way to identify school cases is on the [COVID-19 Report Card for NYS](#). The website first shows reports from labs in the last 7 day period. Those numbers are for children ages 5-17. Not all of the children may be in our schools - this includes private school students and children who may not be attending kindergarten yet. It also includes anyone who is visiting here and does not include students who may get tested in CT. The numbers are informative about recent PCR tests, but do not necessarily project all of our students.

Lab Reported COVID Data for the School District
(Data as of 01/08/22)

Estimated COVID-19 Testing Summary from the Results Reported by the Labs for Age 5-17				
	Total (Since 09/01)	Last Fourteen Days (From 12/26 - 01/08)	Last Seven Days (From 01/02 - 01/08)	New (On 01/08)
Positive	183	69	38	3
Tests	2,945	323	158	22



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Note that the school district data of positive lab based cases we know does not match over the past 7 day period due to the break. That said, the website is a good way to check the numbers for those interested. Just remember that cases of antigen tests are not reported here.

School District Reported COVID Data (Reported on 01/07/2022)

Total Positives from all Reported Testing				
	Total (Since 09/08)	Last Fourteen Days (From 12/26 - 01/08)	Last Seven Days (From 01/02 - 01/08)	New Positive (On 01/07)
Students	76	13	13	3
Teacher	17	7	7	0
Staff	4	2	2	0
Total District	97	22	22	3

What were the results of the PCR testing last week?

Due to the high volume of tests and COVID positive cases, we were delayed in getting results. We expect to have that information by tomorrow and will contact all positive individuals. That number will be reflected in the NYS Report Card above.

What are the COVID-19 cases in North Castle? In Westchester?

The number of COVID-19 cases in North Castle is at 461 cases in the last 14 days. Westchester County reported 4,432 new positive cases in all of Westchester County on January 7th, with a total number of positive cases at 45,469. That number will probably change by the time you follow the link to the page. See the [Westchester County COVID Dashboard](#). The numbers are rising - last week at this time, Westchester had 27,800 cases over the 14 day period.

What should we be doing?

As I said in my last email, our schools continue to contact trace (although most of our schools have lunch seating at over 6 feet, preventing quarantining - and classrooms at 3 feet to prevent quarantining). We continue to stress increased awareness about proper mask wearing. Note that while the CDC still maintains that individuals can wear cloth masks, there are many [media outlets](#) that are sharing information that individuals should use disposable masks. While I will wait for the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC to provide guidance that will result in a change in our practices, please consider wearing disposable masks to school.

With the rise in cases, would we need to go to remote learning?

The District plans to continue with in-person instruction. Remote learning would only be an option if we could not staff our schools, if we saw transmission in our classes, or if the Governor shut schools down. We continue to work on a contingency plan with the hopes of always remaining in-person.



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What about snow days? Why not remote?

The District will use each of the four snow days in the calendar (we have used two already). After that point, we will move to remote instruction for any remaining snow days. This decision was made last year after we surveyed parents and staff.

Thank you for your attention to this email and for understanding how difficult it is to report a precise number of active cases. We continue to have your health and safety as our priority as we teach and learn in our schools.

Sincerely,

Jen Lamia, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools