



September 16, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am writing to provide you with an update regarding an update to items from around the District inclusive of COVID-19 and student transportation.

COVID-19: Assume Good Intent

A team of Delran Township Public Schools staff members are charged with working with the community in order to convey the practices around COVID-19 cases and any implications they may have for your children. Nurses and Principals work directly with me in order to implement public health guidance set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and, on occasion, by the Office of the Governor of New Jersey.

As a District we don't make the rules up that we've been asked to implement, but we do enforce them as we've been asked to. Our team members here in Delran conduct this work during normal business hours as well as into the evenings and on weekend days in order to provide a service to the community.

It is in this vein that I ask you to assume good intent on the part of the District. This is not easy work and those that serve as either the interpreters or messengers of the situation deserve an open mind. Karen Dellaratta, Michelle Sondeen, Carla LeBon, Linda Collazo and Faith Bowman all serve the students in Delran as Nurses in addition to their own individual roles with their own families.

COVID-19: New Jersey Department of Health Public Health Guidance

Parents should not send students to school when sick. For school settings, NJDOH recommends that students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose; OR
- At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, new taste disorder.

For students with chronic illness, only new symptoms, or symptoms worse than baseline should be used to fulfill symptom-based exclusion criteria. COVID-19 exclusion criteria for persons who have COVID-19 compatible symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19:

- Ill individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms who have not been tested or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 should stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and at least 24 hours have passed after resolution of fever without fever reducing medications and improvement in symptoms.
- Persons who test positive for COVID-19, but who are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days from the positive test result.
- An alternate diagnosis (including a positive strep test or influenza swab) without a negative COVID-19 test is not acceptable for individuals who meet COVID-19 exclusion criteria to return to school during periods of moderate, high, or very high community transmission.

COVID-19 Exclusion criteria for close contacts

- Exposed close contacts who are not fully vaccinated should be referred for COVID-19 testing.
- Individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 90 days should not be referred for COVID-19 testing.
 - If negative they should quarantine at home according to the COVID-19 Exclusion Table after exposure.
 - If positive they should isolate for 10 days.

Exposed close contacts who have no COVID-like symptoms and are either fully vaccinated or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 90 days are not required to quarantine.

COVID-19: Higher Risk Athletic and Extracurricular Activities

Due to increased exhalation that occurs during physical activity, some sports can put players, coaches, trainers, and others who are not fully vaccinated at increased risk for contracting and spreading COVID-19.

Close contact sports and all indoor sports are particularly risky. Similar risks might exist for other extracurricular activities, such as band, choir, theater, and school clubs that meet indoors. **Students should refrain from these activities when they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should be tested.**

Please understand that participating in these activities presents increased risk for being exposed to and/or contracting COVID-19 for those that participate. Pursuant to the guidance set forth by the NJDOH, a vaccinated participant is permitted to forgo any subsequent exclusion (quarantine) in the event that they are exposed to a COVID positive individual.

COVID-19: Opening the School Year-What we've learned

We've learned the following:

- In fully vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals COVID-19 is presenting as allergy-like symptoms. If your children are experiencing similar symptoms you may want to examine the feasibility of having them tested for COVID-19.
- Through contact tracing it appears that the virus is spreading socially through friend groups outside of school where those present may have been symptomatic but unmasked.

COVID-19 Accessing District Information

The District will continue to maintain the following resources on the District website:

1. [COVID-19 Website](#)
2. [District Activity Reports](#) (updated weekly)
3. [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) (updated weekly)

District Transportation

The entire student transportation industry has experienced a significant shortage of bus drivers (Want to [apply](#)?) since the onset of COVID-19 in March, 2020. To that end, we have enough drivers to transport our children to and from school for our academic program. However, our transportation vendor, First Student, is significantly understaffed in order to provide transportation services for all of our extracurricular activities (sports and clubs) because the transport for these events takes place at the same time we are returning DIS and Millbridge students home (which is our first priority).

It is becoming an extremely likely event that district parents are going to be asked to transport students to particular, but not all, extra-curricular events throughout


the Fall season when other transport alternatives are not arrived at. We felt it necessary to provide parents and guardians now with advance notice of this possibility.

The Board has well written guidance in Policy 8660 (Transportation by Private Vehicle) that we are using to develop a permission process should we need to implement parent carpooling to offsite events. More information will be forthcoming from your principals, particularly at the middle and high school level, in the coming days regarding this process.

We do apologize for the challenge this places on families of students that participate in our extra curricular program and can assure you that we will make every effort to find alternative solutions as to limit the amount of times parent transportation is requested.

On behalf of the entire District I thank you for being such great partners and invite you to contact me at your convenience should the need ever arise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Brotschul". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and last name "Brotschul" clearly distinguishable.

Brian Brotschul, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools