

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent
50 East Street
New Milford, Connecticut 06776
(860) 355-8406 FAX (860) 210-4132



Ms. Alisha DiCorpo
Superintendent of Schools

August 18, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As we embark on the 2021-22 school year, I am filled with anticipation and hope for a strong academic and social-emotional, supportive environment for our students, especially when we are coming off of a year where students were isolated from peers and were accessing their education in a remote learning platform and/or attending school for in-person learning for only a few days per week. This year, we are committed to keeping children in school full-time five days a week. We recognize that new or updated information and guidance can change the landscape of what we are able to provide, however, as a district, we are committed to keeping children and staff safe in all the ways we can, providing the mitigation strategies that will support in-person learning for as long as is possible.

As I write to you today, we are planning for several mitigation strategies for the opening of our schools. [Our Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Plan 2021 \(Updated August 2021\)](#) has detailed information regarding the mitigation strategies that will be in place. As you may be aware, Governor Lamont issued an Executive Order effective through September 30, 2021, which carries the force of law and mandates masks be worn in all school buildings.

Additionally, in light of the unvaccinated and low vaccination rates, the increase in the Delta variant, and breakthrough cases among the vaccinated, it is important that we remain diligent in keeping our students and faculty safe. **Therefore, this fall all students and staff at all schools will be required to wear masks indoors.** This will ensure that all students can remain in school with very little disruption to their in-person education. See additional guidance here: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/COVID-19/Addendum11-Interim-Guidance-for-the-Use-of-Facemasks.pdf>

In addition to the Executive Order that the Governor issued, the CDC issued guidance on July 26, 2021, requiring all students to wear masks on school busses to and from school. Therefore, mask-wearing on bus transportation is not optional at this time. The school district will support the bus company by supplying masks for distribution to students who need them. Bus schedules will be available on the district website here: <https://www.newmilfordps.org/transportation> by end of day today. Students may not switch from their assigned bus. The only exception is for transportation to licensed daycare providers.

The CDC has also updated its guidance on contact tracing/quarantine. All students and staff who are fully vaccinated will not have to quarantine.

Students seated three feet or more from a student diagnosed with COVID-19 will not need to quarantine as long as they remain asymptomatic and masks are in use in the classroom. This exception to the contact definition applies to exposures between students only.

Staff will not need to quarantine as long as they remain asymptomatic and masks are in use in the classroom, provided they are six feet socially distant for 15 minutes or less in a 24 hour period.

For all outside activities and events, six feet socially distant for 15 minutes or less in a 24 hour period applies to all participants.

For comprehensive guidance go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/contact-tracing.html>

In addition to the mitigation strategies we have put in place, we will continue to monitor for COVID-19 at the local, district, and school levels. As such, I will continue to meet weekly with the Director of Public Health for New Milford, Lisa Morrissey, and our district Medical Advisor, Dr. Evan Hack, in order to review federal and state guidance, our state and local positivity rate data, as well as our vaccination rates, to make informed, collaborative decisions in support of the health and safety of our staff, students and community.

Prior to the start of school, Ms. Lisa Morrissey and I will walk through the buildings with the principals to review social distancing measures and make necessary adjustments prior to students arriving, in order to maximize distancing in as many areas as possible.

We are requesting that parents send in a copy of the vaccination record for their child to the schools prior to the start of school to update immunization records.

If you are looking for a vaccination site, John Pettibone Community Center will continue to host vaccination clinics. Information on the vaccination schedule may be found here:

<https://www.newmilford.org/vaccineInfo>

COVID-19 PCR testing is also offered. For more information, go to

<https://newmilford.as.me/testing>

This year, the district will also be working in conjunction with the New Milford Health Department to offer on-site flu clinics for staff and children. More information will be forthcoming.

I look forward to our continued partnership in the weeks and months ahead. Please reach out to your building leadership regarding any specific building-related questions that you may have.

Have a wonderful week ahead. We look forward to seeing your child(ren) on August 25th for the first day of school!

Sincerely,



Alisha DiCorpo
Superintendent of Schools