

Rocky Hill Public Schools Reopening Plan for School Year 2021-22

Rocky Hill Board of Education

August 17, 2021

Updates for August 17, 2021

- The Local Health Director recommends that elementary “Meet and Greet” be held in only a virtual format and that “Open Houses” should be canceled for 2021-22.
- An update on CIAC Athletics was distributed on August 12, 2021.
- Masks are required for all indoor activities (except swimming while in the pool).
- No masks are required outside for conditioning, practices, and competitions.
- Full seasons in all sports through state championships.
- Quarantines for coaches and athletes are generally 14 days instead of 10 (applies to sports only, not class).
- Vaccinated individuals who are exposed will not be excluded if they remain asymptomatic but shall wear masks for 14 days indoors and outdoors. A negative test obtained between days 3-5 will remove the mask requirement.
- Unvaccinated individuals who are exposed will quarantine for 10 days (with a negative test between days 7 and 10) or 14 days without a test.
- Vaccinated and unvaccinated students who experience COVID-19 symptoms after a close contact with a known COVID-19 test will quarantine for 10 days (with a negative test between days 7 and 10) or 14 days without a test.

Overview of CDC and State of Connecticut's Guidelines for Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Individuals

CDC Masking Recommendations

- All individuals in K-12 schools should wear masks regardless of vaccination status (as of July 27, 2021)

State of Connecticut - Departments of Public Health and Education

- Delta variant transmission rates are increasing all throughout CT. The Delta variant currently constitutes 80-90% of statewide COVID-19 infections.
- Local health director is seeing increases of “breakthrough cases.”
- Vaccine doesn't provide immunity; rather, it reduces the severity of potential illness from an infection.
- Masks now required in all PreK-12 public and private schools regardless of vaccination status - (Through at least September 30, 2021) per Gov. Lamont's August 5, 2021, executive order (#13-A).
- Masks are also required on all forms of public transportation, for all individuals, including school buses, regardless of vaccination status.
- State is pushing hard to have 100% of students participating in in-person learning for SY 2021-22.

Overview, Continued

- Continue to emphasize the importance of the Three W's - Wear Your Mask, Watch Your Distance, Wash Your Hands
- Remember - This is about “all of us” in terms of trying to keep everyone safe.
- The situation continues to evolve - everyone needs to remain flexible and understand that rules, regulations, and restrictions are subject to change based upon changes in public health data.

Vaccinations

- Vaccination (for those eligible) is the #1 prevention strategy available to school districts for mitigating the spread of the virus and maintaining in-person learning.
- Statewide Data for Vaccinations (at least one dose)
 - Ages 12-17 55%
 - Ages 12-15 49%
 - Ages 16-17 66%
- Rocky Hill Data
 - Ages 65 and older, 95.33% of residents fully vaccinated
 - Ages 45-64, 73.62% fully vaccinated
 - Ages 16-44, 73.40% fully vaccinated
 - Ages 12-15, 39.32% fully vaccinated
- Full Vaccine Status - 2 weeks after second dose (or after one-dose of J&J - staff only)
- Currently in Connecticut, ages 20-29 is experiencing the highest proportion of new infections

Distancing and Cohorting

- 3 feet - recommended distance when feasible in classrooms
- Cohorting can be relaxed if other mitigation strategies are in place
- Lunch waves should be scheduled to create more distance between unmasked children during lunch.
- PE and Music - No masks required if occurring outside but must have appropriate spacing. Masks required inside for PE and Music.
- Mask breaks are permitted outside with appropriate spacing. Recess, for young children, presents a problem with spacing; hence, masks should be worn unless appropriate spacing can be managed with fidelity.

Cleaning, Disinfection, Hygiene

- Routine cleaning procedures are recommended
- Continuous spot disinfection of high touch surfaces is no longer necessary
- Contaminated surfaces **are not identified** as a significant source of risk for transmission
- Food Services does not need to continue with single-use, disposable items
- Student and staff barriers not required - will only be used if requested on an individual basis. Not recommended by CDC.

Isolation, Quarantine, Contacts

- Vaccinated individuals are no longer required to quarantine following exposure if they remain asymptomatic.
- Individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 are not subject to quarantine following exposure for a 90-day period (from the date of the positive test result).
- Students seated at least 3 ft. from a confirmed case no longer need to quarantine based upon a classroom exposure (if the student remains asymptomatic and masks were in use by the positive student and the exposed student).
- Districts should emphasize identifying individual close contacts vs. exclusion of the entire class (this will require classroom seating charts).
- These strategies should result in fewer students being placed into quarantine.

Sports and Other Extracurriculars

- Fall athletics should begin on time for SY 2021-22 with full seasons planned (applies to RHHS and GMS).
- Fully vaccinated students/staff do not have to quarantine from sports or other activities following exposure to a confirmed case if they remain asymptomatic.
- The higher the vaccination rate on a team, the greater the likelihood that the team will continue to maintain regular practice and game schedules, and complete the season without interruption.

Rocky Hill High School and GMS

Both schools now planning to Run A/B Block Schedule

- Allows for greater spacing (fewer students) in each lunch wave.
- Students will still transition from class to class after the bell rings.
- Reduces the number of hallway transitions and classes held each day - will assist with contact tracing and reduce number of potential student-student interactions throughout each day.

Other School-Based Events

- Local Health Department Recommends virtual “Meet and Greet” at elementary schools and cancelation of Open House.
- Kindergarten practice bus rides will occur on Wednesday, August 25, at West Hill School and Stevens School for incoming K students only. Masks are required.
- RHHS 9th-Grade Orientation - Students and staff only, masks required.

Students Placed Into Quarantine or Isolation

- All teachers will use either SeeSaw (grades PreK, K, and 1) or Google Classroom (grades 2-12) to post assignments and/or learning activities.
- Each school will employ designated “quarantine coordinators” who will check-in with students placed into quarantine/isolation on a daily basis to ensure that students are keeping up with their school work and provide assistance as needed.
- Students placed into quarantine/isolation will not log into classes for synchronous learning. State officials have confirmed that this is not a recommended approach because it is very challenging for teachers.

Discussion, Questions, Etc.

- Is Stevens School represented by a parent on the reopening committee?

The BOE's reopening plan will apply to both primary schools (West Hill and Stevens) equally; therefore, a parent from West Hill is representing parents at both primary schools. In addition, some the parents on the committee are former Stevens parents who have older children now attending other schools (e.g., GMS).

- Is the BOE considering making mask wearing in schools optional?

At this time, the BOE is required to comply with Governor Lamont's executive order (13A) which mandates the wearing of masks in all public and private PreK-12 schools. This order expires on September, 30, 2021. Of course, the BOE will review and consider any modifications, changes, or extensions to the executive order.

- Will the BOE consider allowing the YMCA or another provider to offer before and after-school care?

At this time, positive cases are increasing due to the Delta variant. The BOE has determined that the focus needs to remain on opening schools for in-person learning. The BOE will revisit the possibility of working with the Town's Parks and Recreation Dept. to offer after-school care beginning in the late fall or early winter.