

Mitigating the Spread of COVID-19 by Staying Home and Informing the School-

If you answer yes to any of the questions on the COVID-19 Screening Tool you should not come to school (or enter a school bus). If you are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, are a probable or confirmed case, or if you are a close contact of someone who is a probable or positive COVID-19 individual, it is important that you follow the state guidance by remaining in isolation/quarantine in accordance with the protocols.

The RI Department of Health protocols call for the state to inform schools if there is a case of COVID-19. We want to enhance that process by having you contact the school if you are a confirmed case, probable case, symptomatic, and/or a close contact of a probable/confirmed case.

Reporting Probable or Actual COVID-19 Symptoms

If you are symptomatic, probable, confirmed, or a close contact please send an email to Mrs. Clark alerting at marcella.clark@paineschool.org.

AND

Please send an email to:

Polly at polly.cairone@paineschool.org

Dr. Barnes at mbarnes@fgschools.com

Kim @Kim.Soares@paineschool.org

Symptom Chart

RI Department of Health Playbook-

Below is a link to the RIDOH Playbook that was originally shared on August 23rd. This Playbook summarizes the steps that should be taken for a positive case, a probable case, asymptomatic, but not probable case, and a close contact. This is a document everyone should read so that you know your responsibilities.

<https://health.ri.gov/publications/presentations/Outbreak-Response-Protocols-PreK-12.pdf>

Clarifying the Terms Positive, Probable, Symptomatic, Confirmed, Close Contact and COVID-19 Screening Tool-

The COVID-19 Screening Tool that all students and adults must complete is designed to identify symptomatic and probable cases of COVID-19 – both classifications require a student or adult to isolate and not enter the school (or school bus).

Probable Case-

The RIDOH Playbook says if staff or student is a probable case the individual is isolated and sent home. Household contacts and roommates must quarantine pending the probable case COVID-19 test result.

A probable case may display any one of these symptoms:

- cough (new), shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or new loss of taste or smell

Or a probable case may display any two of these symptoms:

- fever, chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose.

Symptomatic, but not Possible Case-

The RIDOH Playbook says someone who is not probable but, but who is symptomatic must be isolated and sent home. No quarantine is recommended for close contacts of a symptomatic, but not probable cases.

Close Contact-

RIDOH defines close contact as settings where physical distancing can be maintained or determined and the contact was within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes. To assist with contact tracing, RIDOH guidance calls for classrooms with assigned seats, buses with assigned seats, and seating charts for contact identification and tracing. Settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained and sports teams are areas where precise contact tracing is difficult. For this reason, the RIDOH guidance calls for an entire sports team to be quarantined if one of the team members tests positive for COVID-19.

RIDOH Protocol for a Confirmed Case

A person testing positive is isolated per CDC/RIDOH guidelines. Close contacts are quarantined for 14 days since last COVID-19 exposure. Positive individuals must meet the CDC/RIDOH guidelines for ending isolation before returning to school. RIDOH recommends the symptom-based strategy for ending isolation which requires isolation for ten (10) days since symptoms first appeared (20 days

if severely immunocompromised) and until fever free for 24 hours and symptoms have improved.

RIDOH Protocol for a Close Contact of a Confirmed Case-

A close contact is home quarantine for 14 days after last exposure to the confirmed case. Children or staff members must meet the CDC/RIDOH guidelines for ending quarantine before returning to school. RIDOH can provide a note. Quarantine for 14 days after the last date of exposure to the confirmed case.

Note: Close contacts who are living with a confirmed case must quarantine for 24 days before returning to school. If a parent, spouse, sibling, etc. tests positive then the other people who live in the house must wait 24 days before returning to school even if they test negative for COVID-19.

Additional Strategies you can use to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19-

A close contact is defined by the RI Department of Health as: “Being within 6 feet of an infected person (with or without a face mask) for at least 15 minutes...” The data is clear that mask wearing, social distancing, and hand washing help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. It is important for everyone to consistently adhere to these strategies in all settings to minimize the potential impact of COVID-19 on our students, staff, and community. We should also be constantly aware of our surroundings and be mindful of the fact that it is possible that you, or someone you are interacting with, is COVID-19 positive and displaying no symptoms. Being comfortable around a friend or colleague, because you know them or interact in various settings, offers no additional scientific or layered protection.

Facemasks-

Below is a link to the CDC document on how to select, wear, and clean your mask.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

This guidance recommends that you do not select masks with valves or vents that allow virus particles to escape. It also offers a caution about wearing Gaiters as their effectiveness is still being evaluated and is currently unknown. The guidance recommends two-ply cloth masks that completely cover your nose and mouth and that fit snugly over your face so there are no gaps.

Contact Tracing and Informing Staff/Families-

If a probable or positive COVID-19 student or staff member is identified the school will work with the RIDOH to identify students or staff who may have been within 6' of the person for more than 15 minutes. The RIDOH conducts the contact tracing. We provide them with seating charts for classrooms, buses, lunch, etc. to assist them with the contact tracing process. The RIDOH makes the final decision If a person needs to be isolated/quarantined.

As per the guidelines of the RI Department of Health, if a positive COVID-19 case is identified we will notify the community. If someone has symptoms, but has not been confirmed to be positive, we will not notify the school community. In these situations, we ask the student or staff member displaying symptoms to remain home and we do contact people who may have been in close contact.