



Frequently Asked Questions: COVID Case Notifications

Dedham Public Schools continue to work closely with the Dedham Board of Health to ensure that all potential cases of COVID-19 are accurately identified and pursued to determine potential close contacts as quickly as possible. We encourage parents to reach out to your school nurses with any questions or concerns. Below are five of the most commonly asked questions regarding COVID in our school district:

WHO IN MY CHILD'S CLASS/SCHOOL HAS TESTED POSITIVE?

To maintain privacy rights, Dedham Schools will not release personal details, names or individual health information. We are asking all our families to respect this right to privacy and avoid public speculation.

- Students who are considered a possible close contact will be called by a school nurse to answer specific tracing questions to determine risk, timing and potential contact.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I / MY CHILD IS IMPACTED?

Unless you have been otherwise notified, your child has NOT been identified as a close contact and does NOT need to quarantine at home. For many of our students, even if they were in a shared classroom space, they have maintained the necessary social distance to make the spread of infection highly unlikely.

- Siblings and family members of students who have been identified as a close contact are NOT required to quarantine unless the student has subsequently tested positive for COVID.
- If someone in your family has been notified of close contact, we do recommend that all family members are tested as a precaution.

WHAT IF MY CHILD'S TEACHER IS IMPACTED?

Please remember that privacy rights extend to our teachers and staff as well. Should a teacher need to be out of the classroom for an extended period of time, this information will be shared with parents along with details on how the class will adapt. Our goal as a district is to ensure that students receive a consistent, engaged learning experience.

- Please be respectful of teacher privacy and avoid speculation or rumor. Educators teaching remotely from home, extended leave times or other class adjustments are not always indicative of a positive COVID test or teacher quarantine.

IF POSITIVE CASES CONTINUE TO APPEAR, WILL WE SHIFT BACK TO ALL REMOTE?

Current trends indicated that schools are not sources of concern for spreading the virus. In fact, because schools have put so many precautionary measures in place, student learning in school is being increasingly seen as an optimal alternative to full remote learning, as long as the school is not the primary source of viral spread.

- Spaced classrooms, mask requirements, dedicated walkways and vigilant student 6ft distance protocols ensure that students are following the necessary precautions.
- Schools are actively integrating student education on COVID safety throughout the day, instructing, enforcing and reminding students of critical safety information.

WHAT IF MY CHILD BEGINS TO FEEL ILL?

Parents should continue to monitor their students each day for symptoms of COVID-19 which could include fever, loss of taste or smell, headache, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, fatigue, congestion or runny nose, body aches and/or nausea. If your child develops COVID-19 symptoms, please keep your child home and contact your child's healthcare provider AND school nurse as soon as possible.

- Students who remain at home due to identified symptoms, or due to required quarantine protocols, are asked to join their classroom each day for remote learning, so long as their symptoms allow.