



BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

238 KENSINGTON ROAD ☎ BERLIN, CONNECTICUT 06037-2648
OFFICE 860-828-6581 ☎ FAX 860-829-0832

BRIAN J. BENIGNI SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS	ERIN K. McGURK, Ed.D. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT	LINDA HOLIAN DIRECTOR OF PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES	ASHLEY L. DORSEY DIRECTOR OF FINANCE	JEFFREY P. CUGNO DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS	DENISE M. PARSONS DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
---	---	--	---	--	--

November 5, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am pleased to announce that, beginning immediately, Berlin Public Schools will be following new guidelines for determining the need for students and staff to quarantine. Yesterday, Governor Lamont announced that Connecticut will join other New England states in allowing students and staff who are considered close contacts a “Screen & Stay” option instead of requiring them to quarantine. The goal is to allow unvaccinated students who may have been exposed to COVID in school to continue to attend school **as long as they remain asymptomatic**. Parents must be willing to cooperate and screen students each morning for any COVID symptoms during what would have been the quarantine period. As long as students are symptom-free, they may attend school. If symptoms are present, students would quarantine at home, contact the school nurse, and get tested.

The “Screen & Stay” option helps to reduce interruptions in student learning, but it can only be successful with the cooperation of all. Please note that “Screen & Stay” is only an option for a COVID exposure that occurs **in classrooms or on the school bus while students and staff are wearing a mask**. If a student is considered a close contact from any other interactions, the student must follow the present quarantine guidelines and is not eligible for the “Screen & Stay” option. If cases increase markedly or if families are routinely failing to screen students at home and sending their children to school with symptoms, the school district may suspend the “Screen & Stay” option.

Please see the blue box below for details for specific guidelines for the “Screen & Stay” option.

Finally, I know that many parents have been anxiously awaiting the opportunity to have their 5-11 year old children vaccinated. While we are working on the possibility of a pediatric vaccine clinic here in Berlin, we want to make you aware of the opportunity to make an appointment for a clinic on Saturday, November 13th in New Britain. The vaccine clinic will take place at Beacon Prescriptions, located at 233 Main St in downtown New Britain. They will also be posting a follow up sign up link for the second dose three weeks after the first dose. This link will be available on November 15th for the December 4th clinic. Click on the link below if you are interested:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C45ABAF2BA7FCC34-pfizer3>

I want to close by sharing my appreciation for all of the staff of our schools who are working hard to keep all students and other staff members safe, and to our teachers, who have been so dedicated to supporting the students in quarantine. It has been a challenging time for all of us, and I am grateful for the spirit of cooperation and care for children that permeates our schools.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Benigni
Superintendent of Schools

Students and staff are eligible to participate if the close contact with a COVID-19 case occurs under the following circumstances:

- Exclusively during the school day (no extracurricular or social contact);
- If indoors or on a school bus or other school transportation, and both the contact and the COVID-19 case were consistently masked during the exposure (even if brief unmasked periods, such as snack time or cafeteria occurred, as long as six feet or more of space was consistently maintained);
- If outdoors, the individuals were masked or unmasked but were supervised by staff (e.g., mask breaks, physical education, recess);
- The close contact remains asymptomatic (any symptoms revert to regular isolation/quarantine).

Examples of close contact scenarios that do not support a Screen and Stay approach would be:

- Contact with a case during interscholastic or other athletic activities (other than during supervised outdoor physical education and recess);
- Contact occurring during social interactions or similar activities outside of school (e.g., birthday parties, dining out, sleepovers);
- Contact where the individuals were not consistently and correctly wearing masks indoors and a six-foot distance was not maintained;
- The contact occurred between members of the same household (i.e., the contact lives with the case);
- If, upon return to school, the contact cannot consistently and correctly wear a mask.