



Weekly COVID-19 News & Updates



Monday | January 3, 2022

Dear Fayette County Public Schools Families:

As we prepare to welcome our students back to campus tomorrow, I wanted to provide an update on the layered precautionary measures we will follow to help minimize the potential spread of COVID-19 in our schools.

The FCPS COVID-19 Core Team met this morning with the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department to review the current status of the virus in our community and discuss the district's health and safety procedures. Current data shows that while cases among students and staff are increasing, they are not doing so at the same rates as the rest of Fayette County.

Our experiences from the first semester demonstrate that FCPS can safely provide in-person instruction when proper prevention strategies are implemented with fidelity. Of the COVID-19 cases among our students and staff in the fall, only a very small fraction resulted from in-school exposures.

Just as we have throughout the pandemic, our district will continue to partner with the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department to monitor COVID-19 cases, follow the science, and adapt our processes and operations as necessary to safeguard the health and well-being of our students, employees and families. We will also continue to provide weekly updates and communication with our families, employees, and community.

Although we might wish otherwise, we will be living with COVID-19 for the foreseeable future. As we continue to prioritize the in-person learning experiences we know are crucial for the academic and social emotional success of our students, we are committed to doing everything within our power to keep our students, employees, and families safe.

Please be well and take care of each other, DL

MASKS

In September, the Fayette County Board of Education voted unanimously to require the proper usage of face masks in all district facilities and FCPS vehicles, including on school buses, at all times.

Properly worn masks should cover the nose and mouth of the wearer and strict adherence to this requirement is central to stopping the potential spread of COVID-19. This expectation will be reinforced districtwide.

TESTING

To help reduce the risk of spread, employees, students, and families are encouraged to regularly get tested for COVID-19, even if they are not exhibiting symptoms.

The district is working with several contractors to significantly expand the availability of testing and

we expect to have an announcement within the next week.

Voluntary COVID-19 testing is available to all students, employees, and families on several of our campuses, district facilities and community locations. The list of drive-thru testing sites is updated regularly [here](#).

Testing by appointment is offered seven days a week at the FCPS building located at 100 Midland Avenue. [Make an appointment here](#).

QUARANTINES

In accordance with guidance issued today from the Kentucky Department of Public Health and Kentucky Department of Education, Fayette County Public Schools will continue to follow a 10-day quarantine period for those exposed to a positive COVID-19 case.

The following individuals are required to quarantine after an exposure:

- Those who are unvaccinated.
- Those who are more than six months out from their second Pfizer or Moderna dose and not yet boosted.
- Those who are more than two months out from the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and not yet boosted.

TEST-TO-STAY-IN-SCHOOL

As an alternative to the 10-day quarantine outlined above, **for school related exposures only**, FCPS will continue to offer the [Test to Stay in School](#) option for students who are not experiencing symptoms.

The program will be available at all elementary, middle, and high school campuses this semester and will be expanded to include employees **for school-related exposures only**.

Families are encouraged to complete the [online consent form](#) or return a paper form to their child's school. Electronic consent form notices will be sent to families who have not yet responded this evening.

VACCINES

Medical experts advise that vaccines are the best defense against serious illness or hospitalization from COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines are now available for all individuals five years of age and older, and on January 3, 2022, the FDA approved boosters for individuals 12 years of age and older. You can find vaccine locations and make an appointment [here](#).

Health officials have changed the definition of being fully vaccinated to require a booster shot. According to the new guidance, an individual is considered fully vaccinated:

- For six months, beginning 14 days after receiving their second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine.
- For two months, beginning 14 days after receiving one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- Immediately after receiving a booster shot. Note: no waiting period is needed. (Individuals aged 12 and up are eligible for a booster shot six months after receiving their two-shot regimen of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or two months after receiving one-shot of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.)

OUR COMMITMENT

The health and well-being of FCPS students, employees and families has been and will continue to be the top priority in every decision made.

The Fayette County Board of Education has invested millions of dollars in mitigation and prevention measures, including:

- Installing UVC lights and air purifiers in our 27 oldest facilities.
- Extending the hours of HVAC in all schools to assist with indoor air quality.
- Providing air purifiers for classrooms without windows.
- Purchasing PPE and additional cleaning supplies and equipment.
- Extending COVID-19 leave benefits for employees.
- Incentivizing vaccination for employees.

As superintendent, I will not hesitate to ask the board to invest in other specific needs that may arise as we continue to monitor the trajectory of COVID-19 and do what is needed to protect our students, employees, and families.

Fayette County Public Schools | www.fcps.net



Fayette County Public Schools | 450 Park Place, Lexington, KY 40511

[Unsubscribe lisa.deffendall@fayette.kyschools.us](mailto:lisa.deffendall@fayette.kyschools.us)

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