



# LITTLE SILVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Little Silver Families,

I hope everyone is doing well, and I have no doubt that we are all looking forward to the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. My reason for sending this letter is to give you an update on our Covid protocols and procedures before we reopen for live learning next week. In my last letter, you were notified about our LSCOVID email account that is being used by all staff and families to report confirmed or potential cases of COVID-19 in our district. To date, that line of communication has been most helpful in keeping the school nurses, principals and me immediately informed about new cases and developments in our community.

During my planning meeting with the school nurses and principals earlier this week, it was agreed that we should clarify the expectations and protocols for everyone with regard to isolating and being in quarantine due to an exposure or a positive Covid test. The following information outlines the steps that should be taken depending on your circumstances:

**Close contacts** - If a student has been identified as being in close contact with someone who tested positive (*close contact* is defined as an individual who is within six feet of another person for a cumulative of 10 minutes or more in a 24-hour period), that student should quarantine for 14 days after his/her last exposure to that person before returning to school. As long as the student does not develop any symptoms, then he/she would be cleared to return to school after the 14-day quarantine period. This protocol holds true for staff members as well. Due to the potential delay of contact tracing calls being made by our local health officials, our school nurses will be responsible for making the initial call to families to notify parents about the need for a child to be in quarantine.

As you may have heard, our region in NJ is now in the “high level” for Covid activity, which requires more stringent quarantine protocols. As a result of this designation, the district will now exclude individuals from school if they are identified as being a close contact of another person who has reported COVID-19 compatible symptoms. Due to this protocol being expanded, it is possible that there could be a larger number of individuals that need to quarantine depending on the circumstances of a particular Covid case.

**Symptomatic Covid Positive** - If an individual has symptoms and then tests positive for Covid, the expectation is for that person to isolate for 10 days after the date when the symptoms started. The individual (staff or student) is able to return to school after 10 days and 1 full day of being free of symptoms, especially a fever. In this instance, a doctor’s note is not required to return unless the person remains symptomatic as of day 10. If the person’s isolation time is extended beyond 10 days, then a medical note to return would be required.

**Asymptomatic Covid Positive** - Individuals who test positive without having any symptoms would be expected to isolate for 10 days starting from the date that the test was conducted.



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Individuals who fit this description would be able to return to school after the 10th day as long as they remain asymptomatic. This applies to staff and students.

As you may recall, families were given the opportunity to move their child/children to be fully remote until the end of the first trimester. As of December 8, families are expected to either extend that decision into the second trimester or send their child/children back for live instruction. Knowing that families may wish to rethink this decision sooner than expected, we thought it would be appropriate to offer families a compromise that will give them the ability to have their child/children resume live learning as of Tuesday, January 19 instead of waiting until the end of the second trimester. As in the past, parents that wish to make a change in the learning plan for their child/children must notify the principal(s) via email.

Looking ahead, we realize the need to maintain a close watch on the overall status of our district given the potential for travel and social gatherings during the holiday season. On the other hand, we also believe that we have a safe and healthy setting in both schools due in large part to the precautions that have been put in place since September. Additionally, our contact tracing efforts have revealed that in most every case where a student has tested positive, the source of the virus was identified to be outside of school. As new Covid cases continue to surface in our community, our group will approach each situation in a timely and diligent manner. We will consider and discuss the factors for each case so that decisions can be made and actions can be taken in a measured and appropriate manner.

As of now, our plan remains to resume live learning for all staff and students as of Tuesday, December 1. If you have any questions or concerns related to any of the information in this letter, please use the [LSCOVID@littlesilverschools.org](mailto:LSCOVID@littlesilverschools.org) address and you will receive a response from one of the nurses, principals or me.

As I have stated since August, the goal is to keep our schools open to the greatest extent possible. Our ability to achieve that goal largely depends on families being responsible and cautious with their social lives outside of school. For many of us, that will include adjusting our traditional holiday plans. Our collective willingness to take a more conservative approach during the holiday season will hopefully have a positive impact on the students being able to attend school in person as much as possible.

Stay well and I wish all of you a very Happy Thanksgiving holiday!

Respectfully,

Superintendent