

Summary of New Interim Guidance

Dear Minerva Central School Families,

It has been wonderful seeing our students return to school this past week. Although we continue to face unprecedented challenges, our district is committed to ensuring an engaging, rewarding, and educational experience for all students in 2022. The following is important COVID health and safety information based on the most recent guidance from Essex County, the NYSDOH, and the CDC.

As of January 7th, 2022, Essex County Health Services began implementing New York's updated guidance for isolation and quarantine in COVID-19 cases. Isolation relates to behavior after a confirmed infection. Quarantine refers to the time following exposure to the virus or close contact with someone known to have COVID-19. Both updates come as the Omicron variant continues to spread throughout the U.S. and reflects the current science on when and for how long a person is maximally infectious.

ISOLATION – After testing positive for COVID, the isolation period is now 5 days if you have no symptoms or no fever for at least 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. You must then continue to wear a mask for 5 additional days. Individuals who are moderate to severely immunocompromised should continue to follow standard (i.e., not shortened) isolation guidance.

[Ending Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19: Interim Guidance](#)

QUARANTINE – The CDC updated the recommended quarantine period for those exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Fully vaccinated individuals who do not display any symptoms after exposure continues to be exempt from quarantine.

Essex County emphasizes that wearing masks is still important given the community's surge in cases and the fact that the Omicron variant is present in our community.

New York's full interim guidance can be found online by going to:

[Interim Updated Isolation & Quarantine Guidance](#)

Essex County's COVID-19 information page can be found online by going to

[K-12 School COVID Safe Opening Plan](#)

As always, if your child is not feeling well, please keep them home until they feel better and contact your child's school nurse. Thank you for your continued support and partnership in keeping our school community healthy.

Sincerely,
Kyle H. McFarland
Superintendent