

Dee-Mack Healthy Quarantine Process

The Quarantine Selection Process

A quarantine of healthy students and staff is initiated when either the school or the local health department is informed that a student or staff member has tested positive for Covid-19. That notification launches an immediate investigation by both the school administration and health departments to determine which other students or staff members were in close contact with that positive case (within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes during the day).

School administrators, teachers, coaches, and bus drivers will do their best to determine which students were in close contact with the positive case for the day the student tested positive as well as the two days prior to that test date. We consider all people who were in close contact with the positive case throughout the school day, including those: 1) in classes, 2) at lunchtime, 3) during athletics and activities, and 4) on the bus.

The health department also does an independent investigation by contacting the positive case and asking with whom he/she has been in close contact over the past few days. Some of these close contacts may have occurred outside of schools, such as family, friends, and church groups. The health department and the school district then share the school-related names of those in close contact.

The Communication Process

After students and staff are identified as close contacts, a school administrator calls the parent of each student determined to be in close contact, and shares the following “talking points” of information with the parent:

- You are being contacted because, during school, your child has been determined to have been in close contact with another person who has tested positive for Covid-19.
- The potential exposure occurred on (specified date).
- Due to confidentiality reasons, we are not divulging the name of the person who tested positive.
- In cooperation with teachers and other staff members, we have investigated the situation and identified your student as having been in close proximity (6 feet) for over 15 minutes.
- Your child will need to quarantine for 14 days after the time of the exposure, which will be through (specified date). He/she may return to school on (specified date).
- A negative test result will not shorten the quarantine length. (CDC Guidelines)
- You should be getting a call from the local health department regarding next steps, and you may consult your own physician as well. If the local health department gives you quarantine dates that are different from what I have told you, please let the school principal know right away.
- The local health department may ask you to monitor your symptoms and inform you that your quarantine is not just limited to school attendance.
- Your student's teachers will be made aware of the quarantine and will make every effort to keep your student informed of the lessons and assignments, like any other excused

absence. In some cases, you may be able to learn remotely through the use of technology.

- Please go to our website under Superintendent and review the document, “ Healthy Quarantine Process” for more information.
- If you have any questions, please contact the school principal, school nurse, or Superintendent, Michele Jacobs, 309-359-8965 - mjacobs@deemack.org

Remote Learning During a Quarantine

Like any other excused absence, quarantined students will be granted some grace in terms of making up work and taking tests. Parents are welcome to contact teachers regarding options to use technology to stream live in the classroom during the quarantine, and teachers may reach out to students as well to help facilitate their learning. Teachers will post assignments and other information. For more information, questions, or concerns, please contact your student’s principal and/or teachers.

The Return to School Process

There is no requirement for a doctor’s release nor a negative Covid-19 test result in order to return to school from quarantine. However, we are requiring students who test positive for Covid-19 to provide the school with a copy of the letter from the health department which communicates the return to school date. This will act as verification that the school and local health department agree on the return date and the “ticket” for a student to return to school.

Testing for Covid-19

Due to the close contact, you may decide to have your student tested during the healthy quarantine due to your concern or curiosity. Here are a few facts to consider regarding student testing:

- The school cannot, and will not, require a student to be tested for Covid-19.
- If you decide to have your student tested, he/she cannot return to school, even if he/she has no symptoms, until after you receive the test results. This waiting period may extend the quarantine beyond the designated day of return.
- If you decide to have your student tested, please inform the school of the test result as soon as possible, whether positive or negative.
- If your student tests negative, it will not shorten the length of the quarantine at all, based on current CDC guidelines.
- If your student tests positive, it could change the length of the quarantine, depending upon the testing date, symptoms, and other criteria.
- If your student tests positive, the school and health department will also contact trace your student and quarantine all people who were in close contact with your student up to two days prior to your student’s test date.

Household Exposures

For close contact exposures that occur in the home when a parent, sibling, or other members of the household tests positive, the length of the quarantine can depend on several factors, such as the degree to which you are able to isolate people in the home. Since it is a more complex and more continuous exposure, the school relies on the health department to make the determination of the return date of the student. This return date will be on the letter that the health department provides the student.

Remaining In-Person v. Remote Learning

Metrics for School Determination

Dee-Mack will look at the following county and school metrics as posted by the Illinois Department of Health to consider whether in-person learning or remote-learning is the best option as a district. We will take into consideration the number and/or percentage of students and staff in our district that are probable Covid-19 positive cases as part of the decision to go to remote learning. These metrics can be viewed at <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countyschool>.