

# Colchester Public Schools

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Dear Colchester Families and Staff,

Last week we paused the District's plan to return to full-time, in-person instruction due to an uptick in COVID-19 exposures in our community and surrounding communities. Current data show an increase in both the State of CT and New London County, meaning that cases per 100,000 are on the rise. If this trend continues, we will have to cautiously revisit the reentry plan. *However, if the trend in our district continues to show little to no transmission within our schools, especially between students, we may look to increase the "in-person" time in our schools in November.* More information will be included in next week's update, with the decision on the next steps for our instructional model to be determined by November 2, 2020.

The CT Department of Public Health and local officials are urging our community to take extra precautions including: limiting trips outside the home, wearing masks anytime you leave home, avoiding indoor gatherings with those you don't live with, and not attending large outdoor gatherings. While we continue to monitor the situation, we are preparing to move forward. We will always prioritize the health and safety of our students, staff, and community. We can do this together!

## Travel Out of State

With holidays approaching, I'd like to share [official guidance](#) from the State of Connecticut on traveling out of state. In general, if staff or students travel and stay in an "travel advisory" state for 24 hours or more, they are required to self-quarantine for 14 days upon their return to Connecticut (or be tested, see below). Please take this into consideration when making your travel plans for the foreseeable future.

- **Can travelers be tested for COVID-19 instead of self-quarantine?** *Yes, an Affected Traveler is exempt from the self-quarantine requirement if the Affected Traveler (1) has had a test for COVID-19 in the seventy-two (72) hours prior to arrival in Connecticut or at any time following arrival in Connecticut, (2) the result of such COVID-19 test is negative, and (3) he or she has provided written proof of such negative test result to the Commissioner via email to: [DPH.COVID-Travel@ct.gov](mailto:DPH.COVID-Travel@ct.gov) or via facsimile to: (860) 326-0529. If a test was obtained in the seventy-two (72) hours prior to arrival in Connecticut, or following arrival in Connecticut, and such Affected Traveler has not yet received his or her test results, such traveler shall remain in self-quarantine in Connecticut until a negative test result is submitted to the Commissioner. If the test result is positive and the traveler is asymptomatic, he or she shall self-isolate for ten (10) days from the date of the test; if symptomatic, he or she should seek medical assistance. Travelers who test positive for COVID-19 prior to traveling to Connecticut should delay such travel and consult with a medical professional. All Affected Travelers are required to complete the Travel Health Form.*

### **CPS Music Program Update**

In anticipation of colder weather, the Music Department met with the administrative team to finalize plans regarding in-school music instruction. The team closely followed the CSDE's Addendum 7: COVID-19 Reopening Considerations for Connecticut K–12 Music Programs. While singing indoors, students will wear masks and be physically distanced 9x6' apart. While playing wind instruments indoors, students will be distanced 12' apart. For both types of instruction, students will be facing forward and only be singing/playing for up to 30 minutes to allow for the HVAC to properly dilute the air. Each school will communicate additional information to the families of student musicians.

### **Colchester Meal Service**

Currently, all CPS students and children under 19 years of age can receive free breakfast and lunch. This will remain in effect until December 31, 2020. The CPS meals program has reimbursed those students who paid for breakfast and lunch on Sept. 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14. The cost of each meal purchased was credited back to your student's account. You have two options: (1) you can leave the account credit for use after January 2, 2021, or (2) you can be reimbursed. If you would like to be reimbursed, please contact Leanne Ranheim at 860-537-9421 ext. 381 or email her at [lrnheim@colchesterct.org](mailto:lrnheim@colchesterct.org).

### **Helpful COVID-19 Resources**

- The CT Community Resources page on the Coronavirus website are available at: <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus/communityresources>
- Anyone who needs to find a testing site in the state can visit [ct.gov/coronavirus](http://ct.gov/coronavirus), type in their zip code, and get directed to the testing sites nearest them.
- If you'd like sites near you filtered to those contracted with the state only, visit [ct.gov/prioritytesting](http://ct.gov/prioritytesting).

### **Have a question or concern?**

- **EMAILS**

General questions: [covid19@colchesterct.org](mailto:covid19@colchesterct.org)

Tech questions: [techhelp@colchesterct.org](mailto:techhelp@colchesterct.org)

BOE questions: [boardquestions@colchesterct.org](mailto:boardquestions@colchesterct.org)

Frequently asked questions: [CPS Parent FAQ](#). For the most current update on COVID-19, please visit [ct.gov/coronavirus](http://ct.gov/coronavirus).

On a positive note, COVID-19 transmission to students has been extremely low in our District. This is great evidence that our collective and community efforts are working to reduce the incidences of coronavirus: cohorting, physical distancing, cleaning protocols, safety implementations, handwashing, and staying home if feeling sick. I am grateful for this, and would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone for doing their part in keeping our school communities healthy. Please enjoy the weekend and stay safe and healthy.

Best Regards,

Jeffrey Burt, Superintendent