



Colchester Public Schools

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There is consistent and overwhelming public health guidance that the best way to mitigate COVID-19's devastating impact is to collectively place Colchester community public health as a top priority. As the holidays approach, we encourage you to avoid traveling to other states and countries. Virtual meetings and gatherings with families and friends will ensure everyone's health and safety.

CPS Plan to Remain Open

Colchester will not preemptively close or go remote after holidays. Please see the attached document for the CSDE's stand on this issue: [Prolonged Remote Learning For Holidays/School Vacations](#). Our plan to keep schools open is based on sound data that indicates the following:

- The person-to-person transmission rate within our schools is documented at one case since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Contact tracing of every other COVID-19 case in Colchester Public Schools linked **outside of school activities** to testing positive for the virus. I understand that an increasing number of letters being sent home about positive cases is unsettling, but contact tracing shows that our efforts to keep students and staff safe are working in our schools.
- Out of 528,000+ students in Connecticut, 1146 (0.2%) students have tested positive since the beginning of school; this is with 60% of CT schools operating in 100% full-time, in-person instruction.

We will remain in person for as long as possible, and will continue to isolate the fewest number of staff and students based on contact tracing. A school closure would only occur if we do not have enough staff to remain open or significant, in-school transmission is evident.

COVID-19 Testing Requirements

Colchester Public Schools would like to remind our school community of a few important COVID-19 testing requirements:

- The school district can only accept negative COVID-19 results from a PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) test for travel to states on the travel advisory list.
- If you choose to travel, please remember to review the **State's Travel Advisory**
- If an individual is a close contact to someone who has COVID-19 then they will need to quarantine for 14 days regardless of whether or not there is a negative test. [Home Quarantine Guidance](#)

- Please inform the school nurses or administration if traveling to a state on the advisory list. Students can participate in at-home online learning until tests results are received and reported to the school by parents.

CDC COVID-19 Update: A Safe Thanksgiving Means Staying Home

As cases continue to increase rapidly across the United States, the safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving is to celebrate at home with the people you live with. Please see new CDC guidelines here: [Celebrating Thanksgiving](#). CDC Thanksgiving suggestions for making the best of these challenging times:

- [Consider other Thanksgiving activities](#)
- [Everyone can make Thanksgiving safer](#)

Update on Student Attendance

On November 12, the CSDE provided additional guidance to districts regarding flexibilities for recording attendance. The [Attendance Update](#) was developed by the District to provide guidance to schools and families in the process for recording students as 'in attendance.'

CIAC Winter Sports Update

The start date of the winter high school sports season will be postponed to January 19. All sports will be prohibited from practicing until then. For updates: [CIAC website](#).

Colchester Elementary School and Jack Jackter Intermediate School

- [CES AND JJIS](#) Calendar
 - Monday, November 23rd: Full in-person learning
 - Tuesday, November 24th: Full in-person learning
 - Wednesday, November 25th through Friday, November 27th: Thanksgiving break

William J. Johnston Middle School and Bacon Academy

- [WJJMS AND BACON](#) Calendar
 - Monday, November 23rd: Cohort A in-person; Cohort B remote
 - Tuesday, November 24th: Cohort B in-person; Cohort A remote
 - Wednesday, November 25th through Friday, November 27th: Thanksgiving break

Have a question or concern?

- **EMAILS**
 - General questions: covid19@colchesterct.org
 - Tech questions: techhelp@colchesterct.org
 - BOE questions: boardquestions@colchesterct.org

Frequently asked questions: [CPS Parent FAQ](#). For the most current update on COVID-19, please visit ct.gov/coronavirus. Information on the impact of COVID-19 in our community can be found here: [CT COVID-19-Data-Tracker](#).

Best Regards,



Jeffrey Burt, Superintendent