



January 26, 2022

Good Evening Wildcat Community:

We were notified this afternoon by the Clinton County Health Department that the Ohio Department of Health has updated their guidelines for COVID-19 close contacts and tracing in our schools. ODH has indicated that they are no longer asking for tracing to be done by our school personnel as it has been for the past few months.

From this point on, families will receive a blanket “exposure notification” by classroom or grade level from their building administrator or our health professionals. At this time, individual students will not be singled out from the academic environment as a close contact. Families will be encouraged to self-monitor their student for symptoms and keep their child home until they are symptom free. Students will remain at school as long as they are asymptomatic or until they test positive for COVID regardless of vaccination status. Our health professionals reserve the right to require students who display symptoms at school to be excluded and not return until symptom free.

To assist us in the prevention of a widespread outbreak in the school, we recommend that your child stay home from school if experiencing symptoms described below. To decide whether or not to send your child to school, please consider the following guidelines:

Consider keeping your child at home for an extra day of rest and observation if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Very stuffy or runny nose and/or cough
- Mild sore throat (no fever, no known exposure to strep)
- Headache
- Mild stomach ache

Definitely keep your child at home for treatment and observation if he or she has any of these symptoms: **(Students with these symptoms at school will be sent home)**

- Fever (greater than 100 degrees by mouth and your child may return to school only after his or her temperature has been consistently below 100 degrees, by mouth, for a minimum of 24 hours without the assistance of medication)
- Vomiting (even once, may return to school after being vomit free for 24 hours)

- Diarrhea (return to school after 24 hours diarrhea free)
- Body rash with itching or fever (may return to school free from rash, itching, and fever and has been evaluated by a doctor if needed)
- General malaise or feelings of fatigue, discomfort, weakness or muscle aches
- Frequent congested (wet) or croupy cough
- Lots of nasal congestion with frequent blowing of nose
- Loss of taste or smell

To help prevent the further spread of infection, teach your children good hygiene habits:

- Wash hands frequently
- Do not touch eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, use a paper tissue, throw it away and then wash hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Public health officials want you to protect yourself and your family against a pandemic. Here are some ways to stop the spread of germs and sickness and take care of your family

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.
- If some of the people in your home are sick, keep them away from the people who are not sick.

If you need guidance, or a reference for any communicable diseases, please refer to this web address for a chart from the Ohio Department of Health.
(<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/num/JFS%2008087/pdf/>)

Contact a healthcare provider for further advice. If the ill person is having difficulty breathing or is getting worse, contact the healthcare provider right away.

Often when a child awakens with vague complaints it is wise to observe your child at home for an hour or two before deciding whether or not to bring them to school. Your child should be physically able to participate in all school activities on return to school. Keeping a sick child at home will minimize the spread of infections and viruses in the classroom. Begin planning now for childcare in your home. Address these issues with your employers if they have yet to provide guidance in this area.

At this time, we have not heard information from OHSAA relaxing the requirements for student athletes and teams. Should we receive information regarding any changes, you will be notified immediately. Until that time we will be following up on any positive cases among our athletic teams as we have to date.

COVID positive test isolation requirements are still in place at this time. Students with a positive test are required to remain at home from school for ten (10) days.

Similar to going to the grocery store, attending an athletic contest, or participating in a family function we are all at risk of being exposed to COVID-19. As we move forward we state with certainty that attending school allows for the same exposure as the examples above.

We ask that you continue your due diligence in monitoring the symptoms of your child. We ask that you practice those good hygiene procedures described above and please keep your child home if they are sick.

Our nursing team is here to continue to support you with information as we look forward to our transition back to “normal”. Please feel free to reach out to them if you have any questions or concerns. They can be contacted at (937)783-3642 ext. 3210. We encourage you to reach out to your own health professional if any symptoms become a concern and seek immediate medical support.

Those students who are in the current close contact protocols are no longer required to follow those expectations from this point forward. As was noted above, we are still encouraging families to monitor any child that may have come into contact with a positive case for symptoms described above.

Thank you all for your patience and support as we continue to respond to the ever changing environment we are in today. Our goal is, and will remain, to educate our children in a safe and productive environment to the best of our abilities with the resources and information we have available at any given time.

Respectfully,
Randy Dunlap, Superintendent
Blanchester Local Schools
“GO Wildcats”