November 30, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We hope this letter finds you well. As regulations from the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral Health (DCBH) have evolved in response to our local COVID-19 situation, we wanted to share some important information.

All parents/guardians are required to complete the Daily Health Screener for each child PRIOR to the start of each school day that each child attends school in-person. It is critical to remember that if symptoms develop at any time after the screener is completed, but prior to your child’s next day of attendance upon in-person instruction, you must notify the school nurse immediately. You will receive a student specific link to the Daily Health Screener in your email each morning. Your child will not be cleared to enter the building if the Daily Health Screener is not completed or if your child has 1 or more COVID-19 symptoms, has been exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual or has traveled to a location with an advisory requiring quarantine.

We will be following CDC, New York State Department of Health, and the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral Health (DCBH) guidelines with regards to possible COVID-19 symptom management. Please note the following list of COVID-19 symptoms that may require your child to stay home from school or be sent home from school:

- Fever (100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or greater)
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Extreme fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If your child presents with one or more of these symptoms, she/he will be assessed in the isolation room by the school nurse and may need to go home. A parent/guardian or emergency contact will be required to pick a symptomatic child up within 30 minutes of notification by the school nurse.

A return to school will require:

- Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result or an acceptable alternate diagnosis*
- Symptom resolution
*If COVID-19 test is refused, or if your child is not evaluated by a healthcare provider within 48 hours, she/he will be presumed positive by the New York State Department of Health. She/he may not return to MCSD for a minimum of 10 days from onset of symptoms and she/he will have to meet the requirements of a positive individual.

If your child receives a positive COVID-19 test result, you must notify your child’s school nurse immediately. Your child must remain in isolation at home for at least 10 days after symptom onset. In order to return to school your child must be fever-free for at least 72 hours, without the use of fever reducing medicines and your child’s symptoms must be improving. An official Release from Quarantine letter from the DCBH must be submitted to your child’s school nurse. If you do not receive a letter you must request it from the DCBH website or by calling (845)-486-3555 and email your child’s school nurse that you have successfully submitted the request. Letter Request for Release from Quarantine/Isolation While your child is in isolation, all members of the household must quarantine at home, per directions, from the DCBH. Siblings or other students living in the same household may not come to school.

If your child is ever required to quarantine for 14 days due to a COVID-19 exposure, he/she cannot "test out" of quarantine. Please remember that an individual could test negative on quarantine day 5 and then test positive on quarantine day 9. This is the reason that the DCBH does not allow anyone to "test out." Your child must quarantine at home for the full 14 days.

For ease of access, here is a hyperlink to the NYS Department of Health Toolkit. Please refer to sections A-1 and A-2 about when a child can go to school (A-1) and when a child who has been home with possible COVID-19 symptoms can return to school (A-2).

**Please understand that this protocol may be modified as guidelines change at the state and local level.**

As an important reminder, the MCSD standing attendance policy requires a note from a parent/guardian upon return to school after an absence of any kind, as this is a NYS regulation.

A successful transition to hybrid learning will rely heavily on cooperation from parents/guardians, and we thank you in advance. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

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