

# STERLING HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Matthew Sheehan  
Superintendent



January 14, 2022

Dear Sterling High Community,

Sterling High School will continue in-person, half day schedule for the week of January 18th. School is closed on Monday, January 17th as we observe Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Earlier in the week, Governor Murphy reinstated Public Health Emergency to respond to Omicron Variant of COVID-19. The New Jersey Department of Health released updated guidelines and I have composed a summary of key points below for your review, which we have adopted.

- **For individuals who test positive for COVID-19**, the district will transition to a 5-day quarantine from the start of symptoms (Day 0) instead of 10 days. This new 5-day quarantine is contingent on an individual's symptoms completely resolving before returning to school on Day 6. ***The 5-day quarantine protocol will go into effect on Monday, January 24h, for students and for staff immediately.***
  - Individuals will be able to return to instruction on days 6 -10 but will not be eligible for ten days for high-risk activities where a mask cannot be worn, such as competitive athletics, performing arts, and select activities. Furthermore, a more socially distanced lunch may be implemented for these individuals on days 6 through 10.
- **Individuals who develop COVID-19 symptoms who are awaiting test results or were not tested** must stay home for a full five days (Day 0 is the first day of symptoms). If symptoms resolve, isolation can end after five full days, and individuals may attend school on Day 6. Home tests will be accepted for COVID positive cases, but a PCR is required to confirm a COVID negative rapid test due to reliability concerns. If symptoms persist, individuals should continue to isolate until fever-free for 24 hours and other symptoms have resolved.

## **For Close Contacts of a Positive Case:**

- Unvaccinated students must quarantine if they come into close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Close contact for students in a school setting is defined as less than 3 feet when students are wearing masks or within 6 feet if not wearing masks for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over 24 hours.

- [Fully vaccinated](#) students, individuals who had COVID-19 in the last 90 days, and adults, eighteen years of age and older, who completed all recommended vaccines, including boosters, DO NOT have to quarantine unless they start showing symptoms.
- Quarantine is required for adults who have not received a booster within six months of the second vaccine, individuals who have not completed two weeks with the second vaccine.

Please continue to report students who test positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-like symptoms to the Pandemic Response Team by email at [pandemicresponse@sterling.k12.nj.us](mailto:pandemicresponse@sterling.k12.nj.us) . Visit our website at <http://www.sterling.k12.nj.us/> for all news related to our Safe Return Plan and our in-person, half day schedule. If you have any specific questions, don't hesitate to contact your school administrator.

Guidance is rapidly changing, and Sterling will continue to do our very best to support our students and staff. We appreciate and understanding as we attempt to apply the appropriate guidance to our own experiences with case rates within our school community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MS', is positioned above the name and title of the sender.

Matthew Sheehan  
Superintendent