



# Hastings-on-Hudson Public Schools

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## COVID-19 Management Document – 2022-23 Updated – August 29, 2022

### Overview

This document is our “one-stop resource” for how we will manage COVID-19 during the 2022-23 school year. It will be updated regularly and date stamped.

Please note that the **COVID-19 Management Document – 2022-23** covers our district-wide approaches for managing COVID-19. School-specific requirements and guidelines will be issued by each school, as necessary.

COVID-19 and how we manage it requires flexibility and patience with periodic changes in approaches and plans. Our commitment is to promptly communicate any modifications to our plans.

### An Overarching Framework for Decisions

COVID-19 is a public health and medical concern, requiring educators to work within the expertise provided by Federal, national, state and county public health and medical authorities. We are dependent on state and county requirements and guidance, which are tied to guidelines from the CDC.

For the 2022-23 school year, we are directly adhering to requirements and guidance from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). The Westchester County Department of Health (WCDOH) at this time is not providing an additional layer of guidance for Westchester school districts. Please understand that media reports of guidance and requirements will not be the basis of our decision-making.

Late on August 11, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a nationwide update on [guidance for K-12 schools, early and education programs regarding COVID-19](#). On August 22, NYSDOH and NYSED issued updated guidance for managing COVID-19 in schools. We have coordinated with regional school districts and public health/medical experts to update our COVID-19 procedures.

The procedures for 2022-23 are different in several areas compared to last school year. In short, we are being provided more flexibility to return to pre-pandemic procedures, while still emphasizing critical mitigating strategies to promote student and staff health and well-being.

## Current Procedures

### 1. Hastings is Fully In-Person

We will be fully in-person for all students, grades K-12, all day, every day. The exception will be those students and staff who are in required isolation due to a positive COVID test. (See Isolation section below.)

### 2. No Remote Option and No Live Streaming

We will not provide a Hybrid or Remote Learning option.

We are discontinuing last year's Live Stream option.<sup>1</sup>

We will reinforce our systems for providing any student who is out of school for an extended, approved absence access to assignments and other school work. At HHS, students are encouraged to communicate directly with their teachers. Individual school counselors will also be able to assist students during their extended absence.

### 3. Masks

Masking *is optional* for all students and staff at all times.<sup>2</sup> The exception is as follows:

- Masking *is required* for individuals who have tested positive COVID-19:
  - Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 are required to self-isolate for a period of five (5) days, with day “0” being the first day of symptoms or the positive test. Individuals may return to school/work following the five-day isolation if their symptoms have lessened and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours. Upon returning to school, individuals must wear masks during Days 6 – 10 of their isolation period.<sup>3</sup> This will be an honor system; we will not track the individual mask-use.
- Masking *is strongly encouraged* after being exposed to a positive case.<sup>4</sup>

### 4. Vaccinations for Students

We strongly encourage vaccinations for all eligible students. Similarly, we encourage boosters for age-eligible students.<sup>5</sup> We know that a very high percentage of age-eligible students in Hastings are fully vaccinated.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Live Stream option was offered to students on a limited basis in one of the following three situations: they had a confirmed case of COVID-19 and were out of school due to the required isolation period; they had a household member with a confirmed case of COVID-19; and, they required a medical exemption, due to extreme medical needs, as verified by a medical specialist and the District's medical director.

<sup>2</sup> “[2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19](#),” NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 6.

<sup>3</sup> “[2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19](#),” NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 3.

<sup>4</sup> “[2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19](#),” NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 7.

<sup>5</sup> “[2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19](#),” NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 19.

<sup>6</sup> “Fully vaccinated” is defined as having the full COVID-19 vaccine regime (either one or two doses, based on the type of vaccine) and, if age-eligible, having received a booster. “Unvaccinated” is defined as either (1) not receiving the full COVID-19 vaccine regime (either one or two doses, based on the type of vaccine); or, (2) having received the full vaccine regimen, but not yet boosted if age-eligible.

5. Vaccinations or Mandated Testing for Employees – Not Required

Effective June 30, 2022, the NYSDOH eliminated mandated testing for unvaccinated school employees.<sup>7</sup> We know that over 90 percent of Hastings employees are fully vaccinated, with the vaccination percentage among staff working directly with students over 95 percent.

6. Physical Distancing & Contact Tracing

Physical Distancing is no longer required in classrooms, on buses, or in group settings.<sup>8</sup>

Contact Tracing is no longer required.<sup>9</sup>

For students in grades K-5, families will be notified when a student in their child’s class has tested positive so that precautions (monitoring of symptoms, testing) can be taken. This practice is based on the recommendation of NYSDOH and NYSED.<sup>10</sup>

7. Reporting of COVID-19 Cases

NYSDOH and NYSED no longer require daily reporting of COVID-19 cases.<sup>11</sup>

We will provide a weekly count of COVID-19 positive cases for students and staff, organized by building level. The weekly count will be for that week only and not be cumulative for the school year to date.

8. Testing of Students and Staff

Screening tests of students and staff are no longer required.

Test-to-Stay is no longer required.<sup>12</sup>

Students or staff who are sent home because they are displaying symptoms must be tested and must provide negative test results prior to returning to school. However, standard protocol for infection control will continue to be followed. Families should be in touch with their school’s Health Office with any questions.

Rapid tests will be made available for families of students and for staff members from each school’s Nurses Office.

9. Quarantine & Isolation Requirements

Quarantine –

- Quarantine is no longer required for people who are exposed to COVID-19.

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<sup>7</sup> [“2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19,”](#) NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 17.

<sup>8</sup> [“2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19,”](#) NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 12.

<sup>9</sup> [“2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19,”](#) NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 20.

<sup>10</sup> [“2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19,”](#) NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 20.

<sup>11</sup> [“2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19,”](#) NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 18.

<sup>12</sup> [“2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19,”](#) NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Questions 14-15.

- When exposed, precautions (e.g., monitoring for symptoms, wearing a mask for 10 days and testing after day 5) are strongly recommended.<sup>13</sup>

#### Isolation –

- Students/staff testing positive must isolate for **at least** five (5) days, with day “0” being the first day of symptoms or the positive test.
- Students/staff may end isolation after day five if they have been fever free (without fever reducing medication) for at least 24 hours and symptoms are improving.
- If returning to school between days 6-10, a well-fitted mask must be worn.<sup>14</sup> This will be an honor system; we will not track the individual mask-use.

#### 10. Testing Requirements If Out With COVID-19 Symptoms

Individuals who are ill should always stay home. Home testing is encouraged at the onset of symptoms and the individual should remain home when symptomatic. They may return to school the following day if their symptoms have improved and the parent/guardian has communicated with the school nurse about negative home COVID-19 test results. Home antigen COVID-19 tests are now acceptable to document a negative result. Free test kits are available in each school’s health offices.

#### 11. Lunchroom & Meal Times

Outdoor lunch options will continue for HHS students (as was the practice prior to COVID-19). We will no longer provide outdoor lunch options for HES and FMS. Due to budget constraints, we do not have the staff to provide the required supervision for outdoor lunches at HES and FMS. We also have been advised of the security risk of having lunch tables for FMS closely adjacent to Farragut Avenue. (It is not possible to set tables up in the Farragut Complex courtyard due to noise for FMS and HHS classrooms.) Individual teachers will have the choice to bring their classes outside for breaks or snacks.

#### 12. Barriers

We will not have barriers on desks or in classrooms other than when requested by individual students or staff. The requests may only apply to the individual’s desk. We will maintain barriers in public facing spaces, such as at the security desks and in building and central offices.

#### 13. Busing Procedures

Mask-use is optional on all school buses. Assigned seating will be determined by bus monitor, as was the practice before COVID-19.

#### 14. Ventilation and Facility Cleaning/Disinfection

We will continue to ensure air quality through the ongoing use of the upgraded ventilation systems. We will continue the additional cleaning and disinfection practices throughout each building.

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<sup>13</sup> “[2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19](#),” NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Question 1.

<sup>14</sup> “[2022-23 Frequently Asked Questions Related to COVID-19](#),” NYSDOH/NYSED, 8.22.22, Questions 2-3.

## 15. Parent/Family Visitors and Meetings

Family and visitors are allowed in the schools during the formal day. In keeping with best practices for security and safety, family and visitors must schedule an appointment ahead of time with specific teachers or administrators. When in the building, visitors will need to go to the specific classroom or office solely. We are not able to have parents and other visitors in the schools unannounced and unescorted. Procedure details include:

- a. Family/visitor schedules a visit with the specific teacher or administrator;
- b. Family/visitor checks in at the school's security desk for the scheduled visit;
- c. If unscheduled, an administrator will be called by the security guard, and the parent/visitor waits at the security desk until greeted;
- d. Family/Visitor is met by the teacher/administrator at the security desk and escorted to the meeting/gathering location;
- e. When done, the family/visitor is escorted back to the main entrance to the school.

Group events and activities for families during the school day will be announced by each principal.

After-School – Full access is provided for audiences and spectators to after-school extracurricular events and programs.

## 16. Spectators/Audiences

Spectators and audiences will be allowed at all events. Live streaming of events will take place as available.