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Thursday, April 1, 2021

Topic: Change in quarantine guidelines for Rock Ridge

Dear Rock Ridge Staff & Families,

Straight-to-the-point: We are now offering the option of a shortened quarantine after COVID exposure.

ISD 2909 is now offering the option of a shortened quarantine after COVID exposure. However, a 14-day quarantine remains the CDC's recommendation for the greatest protection against spreading COVID.

OPTIONS TO REDUCE QUARANTINE:

- After Day 7: Must receive a negative PCR/Molecular test result (test must occur on or after day 5 from date of last exposure), must have no symptoms, no one in household tested positive.
- After Day 10 without testing: Must have no symptoms, no positive test, no one in household tested positive.
- After Day 14: No positive test.

RRPS Shortened Quarantine Request Form must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian in order for your student to return to school if following the shortened quarantine. This form is available on the district website or you can get the document here: <https://rrps.org/district/health-and-wellness/covid-19/>

Vaccine Information: The Pfizer Vaccination is available for persons ages 16 and up. If your child has received both doses of this vaccine and is two weeks past the final dose they no longer need to quarantine if they are a contact exposure. Provision of written proof of vaccination is required to follow this quarantine exemption.

It is important to note that if COVID symptoms develop and a person is fully vaccinated they still need to follow the Decision Tree.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL: You now have the option to follow the shortened quarantine as noted in this document and on the school website.

New strains of COVID which are more aggressive in spreading have reached Northeast Minnesota. These new strains appear to be spreading especially when kids are mingling with other kids from around the state and nation. This appears to be particularly happening in youth sports, travelling sports teams, and any other activity, including high school sports, which involves the mingling of kids from different parts of the state.

It is critical to keep wearing masks and practicing social distancing anytime staff, students and their families are out in public or participating in sports. These simple precautions are the most effective ways to keep our students in school. Be smart and prevent COVID-19 from spreading throughout our communities by wearing the mask and practicing social distance.



Here are the last available reported COVID-19 infection rates per 10,000 people. The Rock Ridge School District is considered to be in Central St. Louis County. For our area, the infection rate per 10,000 people (everyone--including school children, staff, parents, community members) is 23.16 and the projection for 3/14 – 3/27 is 17.37. We are seeing case growth across St. Louis County; however, this is not unique to our county, this is what MDH is seeing across the state.

	<i>AllSchools</i>	<i>DuluthArea</i>	<i>GreaterSLC</i>	<i>CentralSLC</i>	<i>NorthernSLC</i>
<i>3/7 - 3/20</i>	<i>19.28</i>	<i>15.14</i>		<i>23.16</i>	<i>34.68</i>
<i>3/14 - 3/27 Projection</i>	<i>24.42</i>	<i>25.63</i>		<i>17.37</i>	<i>42.73</i>

It bears repeating that students who are in-person learning cannot decide, on a whim, to distance learn on a day they are expected to be in-person, in the classroom. Education comes first and I do not support students deliberately staying away from school so they can avoid the remote possibility of being quarantined and being unable to participate in sporting events. This is the wrong message to be giving our students. Education comes first, and sports second. Not sports first, and education second. Additionally, if we have learned anything during COVID-19, it is that in-person learning, for the vast majority of students, is superior to distance learning. If students have complications with their schedule, they should start first by talking to their classroom teacher. Otherwise, these are considered unexcused absences.

COVID-19 test cases: Continue to let us know of positive COVID-19 test cases. Inform us via the attendance line or by contacting your child's school nurse directly if your child or any member of your household tests positive for COVID-19. When you do this, make sure to:

- Inform the school of your child's or family member's POSITIVE TEST DATE (the date the test was taken, not the date you received the results.) Nursing staff will document your child's positive test date. If your child at some tests positive for COVID-19, he/she will not be quarantined because of contact with someone testing positive for COVID-19 for 90 days from the child's positive test date.

Please continue to:

- Wear your face coverings and masks when in public.
- Maintain social distancing even in social settings, e.g. sporting events, family functions, birthday parties, or social gatherings.
- Avoid contact with people from other states and other distant cities, especially if individuals are not wearing masks.
- Avoid crowds, especially if individuals are not wearing masks.
- Wash your hands thoroughly.
- Stay home if not feeling well.
- Quarantine your household if you or any member of your family is home with a COVID-19 test result pending.
- Clean and sanitize school items such as backpacks and lunchboxes as they return home from school.
- Wash reusable masks and throw away disposable masks.
- Inform your child's school nurse if your child has symptoms of COVID.
- If your student is cleared from COVID quarantine due to a negative COVID test result, you must notify your student's school nurse before they can return to school.
- If your student is cleared from COVID Quarantine due to a negative COVID test result, you must notify your student's school nurse before they can return to school.



Important info from the Minnesota Department of Health

- If you or any member of your household is being tested for COVID-19 because symptoms of the COVID-19 infection are present, each member of your family must stay home until the test results are known. This includes children of the household staying home from school and extracurricular activities.
- If someone in the household is being tested for COVID-19 but does not have symptoms of the COVID-19 infection, children may return to school before the test results are known. Examples of this include healthcare workers who are being tested through their employer as a precaution given their job requirements or someone being tested for an upcoming procedure as a precaution.
- We want to again thank you all for your continued support as we work to make this unforgettable year as safe and fun as possible.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/attendance.pdf>

Track local Rock Ridge data

For those who are interested, here is a new link, which will be updated on a weekly basis, for you to follow the COVID-19 cases, as far as location, and the numbers of individuals who are quarantined. Expect the number of individuals quarantined to always be significantly higher than the number of individuals who actually have COVID-19. Immediately quarantining individuals is an effective way to stop the spread of COVID-19. <https://rrps.org/district/health-and-wellness/covid-19/>

We understand parents and families have questions and concerns as we have continue through a school year filled with uncertainty. We want to make sure your questions are addressed. Health.covid19@state.mn.us is an email parents can use for questions they have related to COVID-19 as they arise throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

For up to date local information, you can visit the St. Louis County Dashboard at: [Story Map Series](#)

Sincerely,



Dr. Noel Schmidt

