

Dear SNEP parents, families and staff,

We sincerely appreciate your flexibility, patience and understanding of the continued challenges we are all facing and readjustments we are making due to recent COVID-19 infection rates in our county. We hope you and your families are staying healthy.

Once again, we have received [new county-specific guidance](#) from our Niagara County Health Commissioner, effective Thursday, January 6, 2022. To highlight the changes, there are shortened isolation and quarantine periods for those meeting certain criteria, and contact tracing will be limited to the 0-18 age group, students and seniors. To be clear, you may not be contacted by a contact tracer. We ask that all families be cognizant of exposures that occur outside of school. We anticipate continued partnership with our school-assigned contact tracers to help get our SNEP community back to school as soon as possible after infection or exposure, however, if contact tracing is not available, SNEP will work with each family to determine the safest and most efficient return to school. Our home-test kit availability is limited, and will be prioritized for symptomatic students and staff.

Updates to SNEP protocols are as follows:

Return to School if symptomatic for COVID-19:

For students/staff with symptoms of COVID-19, protocols are mostly unchanged. A negative test will be required for return-to-school, as well as symptom improvement, and absence of fever for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. **We will accept results from a home test kit, distributed and labeled by SNEP, if available.** Photographic results should be emailed to: tlawrence@stella-niagara.com.

Return to School after quarantine for exposure to COVID-19, for those individuals who meet criteria (*see quarantine criteria below):

You will need a signed [Affirmation of Quarantine form](#) and a negative test result. **We will accept results from a home test kit, distributed and labeled by SNEP, if available.** Alternatively, free lab testing for students and staff can be obtained [here](#). Results and Attestation forms should be emailed to: tlawrence@stella-niagara.com

Return to School after testing positive for COVID-19 infection:

Positive results should be uploaded by families into the Niagara County website [here](#). Students and staff who are positive should isolate for 5 days, in accordance with guidelines.

A second test, **distributed and labeled by SNEP**, must be taken on day 5, prior to return to school. If the individual is positive, they cannot return and have to follow standard isolation of 10 days. This is necessary as students cannot remain masked while eating. If they are negative, they will return and have to be masked at all times apart from lunch, when it is not possible.

Once the isolation period has ended, a signed [Affirmation of Isolation form](#) should be completed. Test results and Affirmation forms should be emailed to: tlawrence@stella-niagara.com

Please do not send your student back to school without contact from our Health Clinic Monitor, Tarah Lawrence or Sr. Margaret.

With COVID-19 cases being reported daily, we will no longer be sending email notifications regarding positive cases. This information is updated daily on the NYSDOH School Report Card, which you can access [here](#).

***Who should quarantine if exposed to COVID-19?**

- If you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19, you should quarantine if you are in one of the following groups:
 - You are ages 18 or older and completed the primary series of recommended vaccine, but have not received a recommended booster shot when eligible.
 - You received the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine (completing the primary series) over 2 months ago and have not received a recommended booster shot.
 - You are not vaccinated or have not completed a primary vaccination series.
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***Who does not need to quarantine?**

- If you came into close contact with someone with COVID-19 and you are in one of the following groups, you do not need to quarantine.
 - You are ages 18 or older and have received all recommended doses, including boosters and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people
 - You are ages 5-17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.
 - You had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (you tested positive using a viral test).

Close contacts are someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. For example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes.

[iHealth at home test kit instructions](#) (you do not need to download or use the app)

[CareStart at home test kit instructions](#) (you do not need to download or use the app)

***Please read all instructions on the home test administration and know that even a very faint line in the positive column is a positive result**

Please forward any questions or concerns to Tarah Lawrence in the health office by email at: tlawrence@stella-niagara.com, or by phone at 716-246-2066. We appreciate your anticipated cooperation in keeping our SNEP community healthy, and in-person learning accessible to our students during this difficult time.

Sincerely,
The Reopening Committee

