

September 10, 2020

Dear Parents,

We want to keep you informed of guidance changes pertaining to Covid-19. The MSDH issued updated guidelines Tuesday, September 8th, that include the following:

1. The isolation and school exclusion period for a positive case of Covid-19 is changed from 14 days to 10 days for consistency with current CDC guidance.
2. The exposure time to be considered a close contact to a case of Covid-19 is updated to less than 6 ft. for 15 minutes cumulative throughout the day.
3. There is NO test out of quarantine; the quarantine period is a full 14 days regardless of any test results during the quarantine period.
4. People who have tested positive for Covid-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months (90 days) as long as they do not develop symptoms again.
5. Symptom and temperature screening recommendation added: Temperature of 100° or higher should be considered a fever for screening purposes.
6. Consider focusing the screening questions on new or unexpected symptoms such as:
 - Fever \geq 100° or feeling feverish (chills, sweating)
 - New cough
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Sore throat
 - Muscle aches or body aches
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - New loss of taste or smell

We realize that sometimes physicians or testing centers do not always test every household member if one member is positive, even if they have symptoms. We must follow Mississippi State Department of Health guidelines, but do not want students quarantined from school unnecessarily. During a recent DeSoto County Schools Medical Task Force meeting we agreed, based on the current available medical information, that it is feasible to accept a positive antibody antigen test result for a student if the positive case in the household has been within the last 3 months (90 days). In this case, once we receive the lab result proof, the student will not have to quarantine, as long as the student is not showing symptoms.

Our top priority is to keep our students and staff safe while providing a quality education for our students.

Thank you,

Patsy Davis RN
Director of Health Services
Desoto County Schools