

JANUARY 2022 STERLING'S COVID PROTOCOLS

At Sterling, our top priority is the health and welfare of our community. It is imperative that all staff, students and visitors follow our health procedures as guided by NCDHHS.

Families should assess their student's health at home before arriving to school and follow our sick protocols as detailed in our [Parent Handbook](#). Students must stay home if:

- They have tested positive for COVID-19;
- They have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 and have not met the criteria for returning to school;
- They have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher. A fever is determined by a thermometer reading 100.4 or higher.

Please refer to the Table on Page 15 of the [StrongSchoolsNC](#) NCDHHS document that outlines specific scenarios for exposure and returning to school.

Students must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 to be on campus. At this time, these symptoms include one or more of the following:

- fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- sore throat
- new shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
- new cough (persistent dry cough unrelated to allergies),
- new loss of taste or smell
- diarrhea or vomiting
- or the onset of a severe headache

Should you have any of these symptoms, it is best to seek out your health professional for more guidance. Anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 and has not met the criteria for returning to school will not be allowed to attend school on campus.

Household members are no longer required to stay home if a student or employee living in the same household is experiencing a symptom of illness, but has not been diagnosed with COVID-19, or is vaccinated and not showing symptoms. Students are required to quarantine if someone they live with has been diagnosed with COVID-19 - see Return From Exclusion chart on page 3 of this document for quarantine timelines.

HEALTH MONITORING & SCREENINGS

Campus Health Monitoring & Screening Requirements During the School Day

Staff will continue to monitor students for symptoms such as fever, cough, headache or shortness of breath.

If a child develops symptoms while at school, he or she will be immediately isolated to a designated space under the supervision of a staff member and be required to continue wearing a face covering. A parent or guardian will be expected to promptly pick up their child from school.

More information on monitoring symptoms is available from the [CDC](#).

Quarantine Guidance/Post Vaccination

An individual is not considered fully vaccinated with only 1 dose of a 2-dose series or it has not been a full 2 weeks since getting the 2nd dose of a 2-dose series. It is also recommended that those eligible receive a booster dose of the COVID vaccine as well.

Per the CDC Guidance: Those individuals that **have** received the COVID vaccine and are **exposed** to a positive case, **do not need to quarantine** if they meet the following **criteria**:

- a. Are **fully vaccinated** (i.e., at least 2 weeks after getting their second dose in a 2-dose series or one-dose of a single-dose series)
- b. Have had **no symptoms** from when they were exposed to someone with COVID-19.

See following chart on the next page for quarantine timelines.

RETURNING FROM EXCLUSION

Exclusion Category	Scenario	Criteria to return to school
Diagnosis	Person has tested positive with an antigen test but does not have symptoms of COVID-19 and is not known to be a close contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-19.	<p>If the person has a repeat PCR/molecular test performed in a laboratory within 24 – 48 hours of their positive antigen test, and that PCR/molecular test is negative: the positive antigen test can be considered a false positive and the person can immediately return to school;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If the person does not have a repeat PCR/molecular test, or has one within 24 – 48 hours and it is also positive, the person can return to school 5 days after the specimen collection date of the first positive test, as long as they did not develop symptoms. The person <u>must continue to</u> mask for an additional 5 days to minimize risk of infecting others.</p> <p>The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school.</p>
Diagnosis	Person has tested positive with a PCR/molecular test but the person does not have symptoms.	<p>Person can return to school 5 days after the specimen collection date of their positive test as long as they did not develop symptoms. The person <u>must continue to</u> mask for an additional 5 days to minimize risk of infecting others.</p>
Symptoms	Person has symptoms of COVID-19 <u>and</u> has tested positive with an antigen test or PCR/molecular test	<p>Person can return to school when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been at least 5 days after the first day of symptoms; AND • It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND • Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving. <p>The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school.</p> <p>The person <u>must continue to</u> wear a mask for 10 days after the first day of symptoms to minimize the risk of infecting others</p>
Symptoms	Person has symptoms of COVID-19 but has not been tested for COVID-19 nor has visited a health care provider. Therefore, the person who has symptoms is presumed positive for COVID-19 due to the presence of a clinically compatible illness in the absence of testing.	<p>Person can return to school when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been at least 5 days after the first day of symptoms; AND • It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND • Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving. <p>The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school.</p> <p>The person <u>must continue to</u> wear a mask for 10 days after the first day of symptoms to minimize the risk of infecting others</p>

COVID-19 Screening protocols from North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services - [Public Health Toolkit K-12](#) (link). Please refer to this document for more details, as Sterling will continue to follow NCDHHS guidelines for our school.

RETURNING FROM EXCLUSION

Symptoms	Person has symptoms of COVID-19 but has received a negative test for COVID-19* or has visited a health care provider and received an alternate diagnosis that would explain the symptoms of COVID-19 *In a person with symptoms, a negative test is defined as either (1) a negative PCR/molecular test or (2) a negative antigen test if the person has a low likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 infection (e.g., the person has no known or suspected exposure to a person with COVID-19 within the last 14 days or is fully vaccinated). See CDC antigen algorithm for interpretation of antigen tests	Person can return to school when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND • They have felt well for at least 24 hours. <p>Note: The health care provider is not required to detail the specifics of the alternate diagnosis.</p>
Exposure	Person in a mask optional setting for whom an exception to exclusion does not apply and has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19	Person must be excluded from school for 5 days after exposure. Person may return to school after exclusion if asymptomatic but must continue to wear a mask for an additional 5 days, for a total of 10 days after exposure. The 5 days of exclusion begins on the day after the last known close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual. They should test on day 5, if possible. If <u>symptoms occur</u> , person should immediately isolate until a test either confirms COVID-19, or a negative result rules it out.
Exposure (Exemption-vaccinated)	Person has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 and is in one of the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are 18 years of age and have received their primary series AND booster, if eligible. • They are between the ages of 5-17 and have completed a primary series of COVID-19 vaccines. Boosters are not required to meet this exception for this age group. 	Person does not need to be excluded from school if they have had no symptoms after being a close contact to someone with COVID-19 The person must continue to wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure to minimize the risk of infecting others and should get tested on day 5, if possible.
Exposure (Exemption Masked exposure)	Person has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19, in which both individuals were wearing a mask the entire time	Person does not need to be excluded from school if masks were being worn appropriately and consistently by both the person with COVID-19 and the potential exposed person. This applies to exposures in classrooms, other in-school settings, extracurricular activities, including athletic activities and school transportation.
Exposure (Exemption Infection in past 90 days)	Person has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 and had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test)	Person does not need to be excluded from school if they have had no symptoms after being a close contact to someone with COVID-19. The person must continue to wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure to minimize the risk of infecting others and should get tested on day 5, if possible.
Exposure (Exemption Test to Stay in Mask Required Setting)	Person in a mask required setting and has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in which one or both individuals were not wearing a mask the entire time	Individuals in a mask-required school setting do NOT need to be excluded from school after a close contact, including unmasked exposures (e.g., during lunch or extracurricular activities), if they have no symptoms. Individuals with unmasked exposures in a mask required school setting should get tested on the day of notification of exposure and as close to day 5 after exposure as possible and must wear a mask in school settings. This exemption applies to in-school exposures as described above as well as non-household, out-of-school exposures. While the individual does not need to be excluded from the school setting, quarantine measures may still apply in non-school settings. If testing supply is limited, priority should be given to testing of students participating in athletics because of the higher risk of transmission in that setting.

COVID-19 Screening protocols from North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services - [Public Health Toolkit K-12](#) (link). Please refer to this document for more details, as Sterling will continue to follow NCDHHS guidelines for our school.

REPORTING COVID-19 CASES



Procedure for Reporting COVID-19 on Campus

Each individual's health information is a private matter. No one should publicly declare another employee or student as sick. In the event others need to be notified of a suspected or positive case of COVID-19, local health officials will notify them and provide them further instructions. To protect individual privacy, notifications will not identify anyone by name or contain information that could be used to identify them.

Sterling will report positive cases of COVID-19 to Wake County Public Health authorities and work with them for follow up and contact tracing. Families are notified through our messaging system when there is a positive case in their student's classroom. Sterling will also summarize any cases during the Executive Report at each monthly LHU Board meeting and provide updated Board minutes for review..

If any person with COVID-19 was on Sterling's campus, while infectious, we will coordinate with local health officials to notify employees and families who were in close contact with the positive person while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with FERPA, NCGS130A-143, and all other state and federal laws.

Close contact is defined as being within six feet of someone with COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

In the event of a case of COVID-19 at Sterling, the affected area will be systematically disinfected. Our disinfectant is EPA-approved for SARS_CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

HEALTH & SAFETY PLANS

STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY

MAIN OFFICE/ VISITORS

- All visitors, as visitors, will be allowed on campus and must adhere to all COVID protocols.

MASKS & CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

- All Sterling staff, students (age 5 and older) and visitors will be required to wear a cloth face covering while indoors, even if they are vaccinated. Masks will be optional for children under 5 years olds and for everyone while outside.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

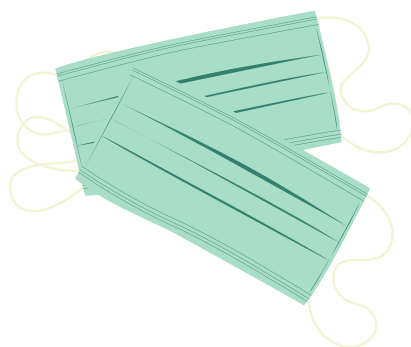
- When possible, Sterling will continue to maintain physical distancing in the classroom.
- For lunchtime, students will have the opportunity to eat outside, when possible. When eating indoors, screens will be provided, when necessary.

HAND WASHING

- We will continue hand washing during key times: Upon arrival to classroom, before and after food, after restroom, after blowing nose or coughing/sneezing, after touching objects used by multiple people and after recess.
- If soap and water are not readily available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be provided. If your child has sensitivities to hand sanitizer, please communicate this with your child's teachers so they can provide your child other opportunities to clean their hands.

CLEANING

- Sterling's buildings and classrooms, especially high-touch areas, will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day and every evening with the use of EPA-approved disinfectant for SARS-COV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Current cleaning and disinfectant protocols will continue to be reviewed and enhanced in terms of frequency and intensity.



Emergency Plans

Should an **individual student** need to quarantine, teachers will provide individual work plans and all absences will be excused.

If a **K-8th whole classroom** needs to quarantine due to a positive case of COVID-19, temporary virtual plans will be emailed to all families by the classroom teacher:

- Schedules will be provided for Zoom lesson times each day
- Work plans to be provided
- EC will be prioritized
- No Specials will be offered
- Devices will be available for those that need it

Should there be a **statewide mandated closure**, all K-8th Sterling students will go into a virtual learning classroom with their current teachers (all rosters will remain the same):

- Schedules will be provided for Zoom lesson times
- There will be optional Specials classes available
- EC will be prioritized
- Devices will be available for those who need it

