

January 11, 2022

Dear Bement CUSD 5 parents and guardians,

We wanted to share some updated information with all of you. The isolation and quarantine period for students and staff members sick with COVID-19 or considered a close contact has been **reduced to five days**. This news is as of 1:00p.m. on January 11<sup>th</sup> and is subject to change. ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education) still has not weighed in with their guidance. We will update you all as necessary if/when we hear from them.

The Illinois Department of Public Health, announced that they have adopted CDC guidance for PK-12 schools that cuts the isolation and quarantine period in half from 10 days to 5 days. The Centers for Disease Control updated its guidance for PK-12 schools on January 6. We have been waiting on ISBE to put forth their guidance ever since.

As a result, effective immediately, Bement CUSD 5 will implement the updated guidance. As soon as possible, we will contact staff, students and families who are currently impacted by a quarantine with a revised return to school plan.

Today's announcement **does not** change the state of Illinois' mask requirement for anyone inside school buildings. The Governor's indoor mask mandate for school is still in effect until further notice.

Staff and students who are currently impacted by a quarantine now have a revised return to school date. Please see the chart below to know when to send your child back to school. This is simply an example:

<i>If a student or staff member tested positive or first had symptoms on the following date:</i>	<i>The new return to school/work date is the following:</i>
Monday, 1/3	Monday, 1/10
Tuesday, 1/4	Monday, 1/10
Wednesday, 1/5	Tuesday, 1/11
Thursday, 1/6	Wednesday, 1/12
Friday, 1/7	Thursday, 1/13
<i>*Any date prior to 1/3/2022 may return on Monday, 1/10</i>	<i>**The date above is if a person is fever free, no diarrhea or vomiting for 24 hours and symptoms have improved.</i>

**Unvaccinated students and not boosted staff members** who are close contacts are now required to quarantine for 5 days.

In addition, I want to pass along information from IDPH and CDC related to quarantine and recommended isolation periods. Below is summary information.

### What is quarantine?

Quarantine means staying home for at least 5 days after exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19. This is because someone can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 but may not show symptoms. Even though someone may not show symptoms, they can still spread the virus.

Quarantine is different from isolation. Isolation is used by someone who has symptoms of COVID-19, or tests positive for the virus that causes COVID-19, even if they don't have symptoms. Isolation helps prevent transmission of the virus by separating people infected with the virus from those who are not infected.

### How does this new quarantine guidance impact staff and students if they test positive for COVID-19?

#### CDC Recommended Isolation Period for Those Testing Positive for COVID-19

- Staff or students who tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, should isolate for 5 days after onset of symptoms, or 5 days from specimen collection date if no symptoms are present.
- Staff or students who test positive for COVID-19 and have no symptoms or their symptoms are resolving can be released from isolation after 5 days. To calculate the 5-day isolation period, day 0 is the first day of symptoms or specimen collection date if asymptomatic. If they continue to have fever or other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, they should wait to end isolation until they are fever-free for 24 hours and their other symptoms have improved.
- Schools should ensure that staff or students who test positive for COVID-19 also do the following:
  - Continue to wear a well-fitted mask around others (including at home) for 5 additional days after release from isolation. If unable to wear a mask when around others, the case should continue to isolate for a total of 10 days.
  - Avoid being around students or staff who are [immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease](#).
  - If masks need to be removed (e.g., for lunch), ensure 6 feet of physical distancing until 10 days after symptom onset or positive test.

**How does the new quarantine guidance impact staff and students who are considered close contacts to someone who tested positive with COVID-19?**

**CDC Recommended Quarantine Period for Close Contacts to Someone with COVID-19**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ages 18 or older and have received all <a href="#">recommended vaccine doses</a>, including <a href="#">boosters</a> and <a href="#">additional primary shots</a> for some immunocompromised people.</li> <li>• Ages 5-17 years and completed the <a href="#">primary series</a> of COVID-19 vaccines.</li> <li>• Confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (you tested positive using a <a href="#">viral test</a>).</li> </ul>	<p>Quarantine not required</p> <p>Wear a mask around others for 10 days<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Test on day 5, if possible</p> <p>If a person develops symptoms, they should immediately isolate until a negative test confirms symptoms are not caused by COVID-19</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ages 18 or older and completed the <a href="#">primary series</a> of recommended vaccine, but have not received a <a href="#">recommended</a> booster shot when eligible.</li> <li>• Received the single-dose Johnson &amp; Johnson vaccine (completing the primary series) over 2 months ago and have not received a <a href="#">recommended</a> booster shot.</li> <li>• Unvaccinated or have not completed a <a href="#">primary vaccine series</a>.</li> </ul>	<p>Stay home and mask around others for 5 days. After that, continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Test on day 5, if possible</p> <p>If a person develops symptoms, they should immediately isolate until a negative test confirms symptoms are not caused by COVID-19.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Children who have received the primary vaccination series and are not eligible for booster doses after 5 months for Pfizer, 6 months for Moderna, or 2 months for Johnson and Johnson should not be excluded from school after close contact unless they develop symptoms and test positive for COVID-19. If masks need to be removed (e.g., for lunch), ensure 6 feet of physical distancing until 10 days after exposure.

Students and staff involved in athletics will be able to come back to school on Day 6 if symptoms have improved, but won't be able to participate in athletics until Day 11. This is in following the CDC guidelines.

Thank you for your continued support of our students and teachers. It's been an incredibly difficult year, but we will continue to push forward together.

Sincerely,

The Bement CUSD 5 Admin. Team