

ORLEANS CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION

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October 26, 2021

Dear Parents, Students and Staff of OCSU:

In order to maintain safe learning environments for our students and staff, we are **updating** a few COVID guidelines as recommended by the Agency of Education and the Vermont Department of Health from the letter sent at the end of September.

All of the schools within the Orleans Central Supervisory Union will be participating in the state's Test to Stay program soon (Orleans, Brownington, Glover, Barton, Irasburg, Albany and Lake Region).

We hope to receive approval by the state to launch this program in mid-November.

Parents and guardians of OCSU children will be able to go online and complete a consent/permission form or ask for a paper copy.

The Test to Stay program will allow any student who is considered a "close contact" to be able to have the rapid test (from the swab to the result is about 15 minutes) in order to receive a negative COVID test and remain at school vs. having to go home and quarantine. This program is being launched in other districts in our region and from the multiple conversations and meetings I have had with area Superintendents and the State of Vermont Schools Boards, Superintendent and Principals Associations, we feel this option will work the best for us to allow students to stay in school.

Once we have launched the program and your child is considered a close contact, if you have given permission, we will be able to administer the test. In order to successfully administer this program, we are required to do the test for 7 consecutive school days for your child to be able to remain in school with a negative result for all seven days. I know this sounds like a long time; however, your school administrator and staff are preparing at this time to be able to offer this to you and your children vs. having to ask families to quarantine their child for 7 days at home and then provide proof of a negative test in order to return to school.

There will be more information coming out to all parents and guardians in about two weeks when we have received approval from the State and have the instructions for you to follow in order to give consent.

If you have questions, please contact your Building Administrator.

COVID Guidelines (updates in **red**):

- All OCSU schools will open for full in-person instruction with no distancing requirements in place.
- **Students and Staff at Lake Region High School are required to wear masks until January 17, 2022 (see details below).**
- All PreK-8 Staff and Students are required to wear masks every day.
- Per Federal regulation, all students and adults riding a school bus must wear masks.

- There are no daily health check requirements or temperature checks however, please keep your child home if they are sick or showing symptoms of COVID:
 - Fever (100.4 °F or higher)
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Chills
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- Schools will be doing contact tracing in the event a positive case is identified and families will be notified on next steps if needed.
- There are no options for virtual instruction in OCSU this year; however, The Agency of Education still offers home study.

In order to help clarify, we will be starting the year with all students and staff wearing masks.

After January 17th, we will notify families if Lake Region Union High School student vaccinations have met the 80% threshold as recommended by the Agency of Education and Department of Health. Only when 80% of students who are eligible for the vaccine have been vaccinated will Lake Region High School staff and students be able to go mask free.

For this school year, until guidance changes, all Lake Region Elementary and Middle School students and staff will need to wear masks. (Orleans, Barton, Glover, Irasburg, Albany and Brownington)

As the Vermont Agency of Education guidance changes, we will inform staff and families. The Orleans Central Supervisory Union administration, faculty and staff are focused on maintaining safe environments across all schools as we did last year during the peak of the pandemic.

Please use the following link for more information from the VT Department of Health.
<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19>

Please note that the restrictions above may change pending new guidelines from the Agency of Education or the Department of Health.

We thank you for your support and willingness to participate in this program and assist the schools with keeping our children in school as much as possible.

We wish the best for you and your family.

Be well,



Penny Chamberlin
 Superintendent of Schools
 Orleans Central Supervisory Union