

PROPOSED STRATEGY TO REDUCE QUARANTINE AWAY FROM SCHOOL

Screen and Stay

Allow students and staff who are **unvaccinated or partially vaccinated** to remain in school after close contact with a COVID-19 case, provided:

1. The only contact occurred during the school day *(no extracurricular or social contact)*
2. If indoors or on a school bus or other transportation, both the contact and the case were masked during exposure
3. If outdoors, masked or unmasked but staff supervised *(e.g., mask breaks, PE, recess)*
4. The Contact remains asymptomatic *(any symptoms revert to regular isolation/quarantine)*

Screen and Stay *(cont.)*

Examples of close contact scenarios that would not support a **Screen and Stay** approach would be:

1. Contact with a case during interscholastic or other athletic activities *(other than during supervised Physical Education)*
2. Contact occurring during social interactions or similar activities outside of school *(e.g., birthday parties, dining out, sleepovers)*
3. Contact where the case or contact is not consistently and correctly wearing a mask indoors *(e.g., eating, wind instrument playing)* and 6 ft. distance is not maintained
4. Household contacts *(i.e., the contact lives with the case)*
5. The contact cannot consistently and correctly wear a mask *(and cannot be provided appropriate alternative protective strategies)* or cannot perform daily symptom screening

Screen and Stay (cont.)

In order to remain in the *Screen and Stay* protocol, the following should apply:

1. If the student/staff is **unvaccinated or partially vaccinated** (*i.e., started COVID-19 series but not yet completed*), they must affirm that:
 - a) they have read and understand the *Screen and Stay* requirements
 - b) that they intend to screen for symptoms each day prior to school for 14 calendar days
 - c) that they intend to remain home and notify the school if symptoms develop
2. *Screen and Stay* applies to **in-person learning only**, and regular quarantine procedures should continue to be used for athletics, extracurriculars, and other activities outside of the school day.
3. Individuals in this protocol should not participate in aerosol-generating activities while in school (*e.g., Phys. Ed., wind instrument playing, choir/singing, projected speech*) and schools should provide alternative programming for affected students for the duration of the *Screen and Stay* period.

Why *Screen and Stay* now?

- Frequent repeated quarantines are negatively affecting learning and burdening families
- Provides immediate relief without extensive operational planning
- Temporary solution for remainder of Fall while vaccines roll-out for 5–11-year-old students
- Community case rates are stable-to-decreasing
- Mitigation strategies inside schools in CT are very strong and compliance is high
- Documented transmission inside school buildings has been infrequent
- Benefits of in-person learning likely outweigh any increased risk of transmission, especially among masked and asymptomatic students

Why not *Test and Stay*?

- Operational planning involved would significantly delay relief (weeks-to-months), with likely equity impacts
- Cost and staff time/burnout burden on school districts (makes adoption less likely)
- Supply chain for rapid antigen tests and other supplies is currently strained
- Operationalizing Test and Stay unlikely to outpace vaccine roll-out for 5–11-year-old students
- CLIA waivers, parental consent to testing, and results reporting
- Project COVID DeteCT already operating serial testing in some CT schools

SCREEN AND STAY DECISION WORKSHEET

Once a person is identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 case, schools can use this worksheet to determine if that student or staff person (i.e., the *Contact*) should be given the option to participate in the *Screen and Stay* protocol or if they should follow [normal quarantine procedures](#).

1. Did the *Contact* have any exposure to any COVID-19 case outside of the normal school day?

NO

↓ Move to Q2

YES →

STOP!
Follow procedures in
[Addendum 5.](#)

2. Did the entire period of exposure between the *Contact* and the COVID-19 case involve exposure inside the school or on school transportation where both were consistently and correctly wearing masks and/or outdoor exposure (with or without masks) during a regular school period that was monitored by a staff person?

YES

↓ Move to Q3

NO →

STOP!
Follow procedures in
[Addendum 5.](#)

3. Is the *Contact* able to continue to consistently wear a mask at all times (or can they be afforded alternative mitigation strategies) while inside the school building and have a parent/guardian screen them (or screen themselves if they are an adult) for COVID-19 symptoms prior to leaving their home every day for 14 calendar days?

YES

↓ Move to Q4

NO →

STOP!
Follow procedures in
[Addendum 5.](#)

4. Is the school able to restrict participation in, and provide appropriate alternatives to, higher-risk (droplet generating) activities, such as those involving singing, wind instrument playing, and aerobic Physical Education activities, for the *Contact* for 14 calendar days?

YES



NO →

STOP!
Follow procedures in
[Addendum 5.](#)

Screen and Stay is appropriate.

Screen and Stay is offered as an option for school districts, not required.

Even if a school district is implementing ***Screen and Stay***, the protocol is still optional for staff/students/families.

Contacts can opt to quarantine at home if they prefer.

In the guidance document, “Addendum 5” refers to the current isolation/quarantine guidance DPH/CSDE have provided to school districts (i.e., “regular” procedures).