



# OLD COLONY

REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
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August 25, 2021

Dear Old Colony Community,

We hope this correspondence finds your family well. As our summer programming comes to an end, we look forward to welcoming staff back on Monday, August 30<sup>th</sup> and students on Tuesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>.

The purpose of this correspondence is to inform families that effective August 25, 2021 Commissioner Jeffrey Riley implemented a universal masking mandate for all students & staff until at least Friday, October 1, 2021. Our Old Colony School Committee has formally reinstated our mask policy effective August 25, 2021. A copy of the policy is available at the [following link](#). Per DESE guidance, after October 1, 2021, if a school demonstrates a vaccination rate of 80% or more of students and staff in the school, then vaccinated individuals in that school would no longer be subject to the DESE mask requirement. DESE will provide additional information to districts in the coming weeks in preparation for the October 1 date, including how to demonstrate the 80% vaccination rate threshold.

Effective August 25, 2021, all students, staff, and visitors to our Old Colony building will be required to wear a mask upon entry. Please know that we are aware of the many feelings associated with masking, and thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding as we move forward. Please consider completing the survey at the [following link](#) to help us gauge the following:

- Whether families are comfortable returning to school without a mask after the October 1, 2021 date if vaccination rates are at 80% or higher (per recent DESE guidance)
- Interest in an on-site vaccination opportunity
- Where vaccination rates currently stand within our Old Colony community

For those interested in vaccination, the Rochester Health Department, in partnership with Southcoast Health, is hosting a free Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccination clinic open to all individuals age 12 and older on Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 PM to 7:00 PM at Plumb Corner, 565 Rounseville Rd in Rochester. Minors must have a parent or legal guardian sign the consent form at the clinic. Southcoast Primary Care Provider is not required. No appointment is required, but pre-registration is appreciated to ensure enough vaccine is brought to the clinic. Call (844) 297-2952 to register. Second dose appointments will be September 29, 2021 from 2:00-7:00 PM. This clinic is open to all Massachusetts residents.

In an effort to minimize the impact of quarantine time, Old Colony will offer families the opportunity to participate in the statewide testing program for those who may be symptomatic or have been identified as a close contact. In order for a minor to participate in the testing program, a parent or guardian must authorize collection and testing for COVID-19 at school. If you would like your student to have access to the “Test and Stay” program, please visit the [following link](#) and select “Sign Consent Form For a Minor” or “Sign Consent Form For Yourself” (students 18 and over or staff).

Old Colony will be conducting the following testing in an effort to minimize the need for quarantine (only with consent):

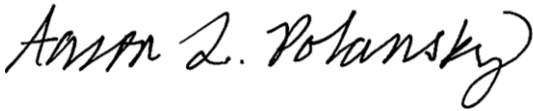
- Testing on symptomatic individuals: for when individuals present symptoms while at school
- Individual testing on close contacts (Test and Stay): for asymptomatic close contacts to be tested daily for at least five (5) days from the first day of exposure, with individuals testing negative being allowed to remain at school

The following close contacts are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols:

- **Asymptomatic, fully vaccinated close contacts:** Individuals who are asymptomatic and fully vaccinated are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- **Classroom close contacts:** An individual who is exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual in the classroom while both individuals were masked, so long as the individuals were spaced at least 3 feet apart, is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols. *Please note that there will be circumstances where students are sitting closer than 3 feet from each other given the size of some of our classrooms.*
- **Bus close contacts:** Individuals on buses must be masked according to federal requirements. As such, individuals who are masked on buses when windows are open are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- **Close contacts who have had COVID-19 within the past 90 days:** An individual who has been previously diagnosed with COVID-19 and then becomes a close contact of someone with COVID-19 is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols if:
  - The exposure occurred within 90 days of the onset of their own illness AND
  - The exposed individual is recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms.

We thank you for your continued collaboration and understanding and look forward to seeing staff and students early next week.

Respectfully,



Aaron L. Polansky  
Superintendent-Director