NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Department of Health

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To: School Administrators and Local Health Departments

RE: NYSDOH COVID quarantine and isolation in the schools setting

The recent updates by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding recommended vaccination schedules as well as quarantine (for exposed individuals) and isolation (for infected individuals) have been met by many questions from the school community. The NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) has reviewed these documents and will be issuing a revised Isolation and Quarantine guidance, most recently released on January 4, 2022 most recently released on January 4, 2022, shortly. We will also update our "test-to-stay memo last updated December 23, 2021" that was last updated December 23, 2021, to account for the new quarantine length.

We are providing the following clarifications to assist school leadership in continuing to provide in-person instruction. NYSDOH recognizes the CDC priority of safely providing in-person instruction, as well as the importance of multi-layer mitigation strategies in place in K-12 school settings.

1. Masking and Distancing: Both masking and distancing continue to be required in school settings.

2. Quarantine (for Individuals who are exposed to someone with COVID-19)
    a. In-classroom activities: **All fully vaccinated* individuals (students, teachers, and staff), who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19 may continue to attend or work at school, regardless of booster status**, while quarantined outside of school**.** This recommendation continues previous guidance in place prior to January 4. Continued attendance applies only to participation in classroom activities and taking the bus to and from school**.**
        *Fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks after the receipt of either two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or one dose of Johnson and Johnson vaccine or full course of any other recognized vaccine.

    b. Extracurricular or after school activities: Individuals 12 years and older who are eligible for a booster but not boosted, and who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19, cannot participate in extracurricular or after school activities and, aside from school attendance for instruction and bus travel, must adhere to a 5-day quarantine at home. Fully vaccinated 5-11-year-old children are not eligible for a booster and have no further restrictions.

    c. Students, teachers, and staff who are not vaccinated or have not completed a primary vaccine series who came into close contact with someone with COVID-19 should quarantine for at least 5 days (day 0 through day 5) after their last close contact These individuals could be eligible for Test to Stay programs that would allow them to stay in the school setting during the

quarantine period. Outside the school setting, quarantine recommendations would apply.

d. Isolation: Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for a minimum of 5 days (regardless of vaccination status). If symptoms persist, further isolation will be required; otherwise, they may attend or work at school after the 5-day isolation.

We hope this clarification is useful for ensuring that schools remain both safe and open for in-person instruction. Detailed guidance reflecting these parameters will be forthcoming soon.

Thank you for your partnership and continued efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Mary T. Bassett, M.D., M.P.H
Acting Commissioner of Health