



9964 Gast Road, Bridgman, MI 49106 Phone (269) 465-5432 Fax (269) 466-0221

December 4, 2020

Dear Bridgman Public Schools Stakeholders,

As you may be aware, the CDC recently presented new acceptable alternative options for reducing quarantine timelines based on scientific findings. The existing 14-day recommendation was based on earlier data that estimated the COVID-19 incubation period. At the national level, estimates of the COVID-19 incubation period have been refined based on a review of case data for hundreds of thousands of cases. Data from that assessment indicate that 99% of all infections will present within ten days of exposure.

Based on the evaluation of the CDC information, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Berrien County Health Department are updating guidance to specify that the post COVID-19 exposure quarantine period for residents be modified to 10 days from the last known exposure. People will only be required to quarantine for 10 days after a close contact exposure that:

- The individual does not develop any symptoms or clinical evidence of COVID-19 infection during the 10-day quarantine period.
- Daily symptom monitoring continues through day 14 after the last known close contact exposure.

When someone within Bridgman Public Schools tests positive for COVID-19, individuals that are identified as close contacts to the positive person will be notified by the Berrien County Health Department and/or the school district. Effective December 4, 2020, anyone who has been in close contact with a positive individual will be given instructions for a **10-day** quarantine past their last exposure date.

While the CDC has introduced a 7-day quarantine protocol option that is paired with a negative test, Bridgman Public Schools has elected to not utilize this procedure. The current infrastructure in our community is not equipped to handle this alternative. Bridgman Public Schools could not effectively manage those logistics and there are too many variables that we could not control using that protocol. This option could create a potential unsafe learning environment for our staff and students and will not be used during the 2020 – 2021 school year.

Reminder – In accordance with Board of Education policies, our Return to Learn plans and direction from local, state and federal health officials, if your student has any of the following symptoms, **you must keep them home from school!**

- temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- sore throat
- an uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing
- the onset of a severe headache
- diarrhea and/or vomiting
- unusual belly pain
- new loss of taste or smell



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IMPORTANT: Based on Board policies and written guidance from local, state and federal health officials, in order for your child to return to school after experiencing one or more of the above symptoms a parent/guardian must provide a negative COVID-19 test result or a doctor's note releasing the student to attend school. If you do not provide a negative COVID-19 test result or doctor's note, then your student will be excluded from Bridgman Public Schools for ten (10) days from the first day they had symptoms. They must also be fever free for 24 hours and/or their symptoms have improved **after** the ten (10) day exclusion period before they can return.

Please continue to follow all COVID-19 health and safety recommendations from the Berrien County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Cleaning your hands often, with either soap and water for 20 seconds or a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Putting distance between yourself and other people (at least 6 feet)
- Covering your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when around others
- Covering your cough and sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Clean your hands after throwing away the tissue.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces daily.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact your students building principal or myself.

We must all partner together to continue with face-to-face instruction and keep our staff and students safe and healthy.

Educationally yours,

Shane M. Peters, Superintendent