



FY22 COVID Protocols and Procedures

Updated August 25th 2021

August 18, 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians, and MPS Staff:

It is time for our annual celebration of our return to school! This year, it feels much more special than most years. We will celebrate with you as we have a full return for all students. What we have collectively experienced throughout this pandemic has taught us lessons we can lean on today to be successful in our efforts. The pandemic has not yet been defeated, and we still need to take actions to protect each other and maintain a strong and stable school environment. Over the spring we were able to loosen restrictions on the school environment, and we will start this school year with the following mitigation strategies in place:

- 1. Masks will be required for all students, staff, and visitors when indoors, and while riding the bus.**
- 2. Lunch will have distancing protocols in place while students are eating.**
- 3. There are no masks required when students, staff, or visitors are outdoors.**

It is remarkable that we have been able to lift so many restrictions since last year. My message to our community is simple: I want to avoid any and all interruptions this school year. We all want to have a consistent school year for our kids. Masks will help us achieve this goal. Masks will limit unnecessary quarantine time for our kids and will prevent the spread of COVID in our schools.

I truly look forward to welcoming back all of our students and I hope you all enjoy the rest of your summer!

Sincerely,

Michael Bergeron

Superintendent of Schools

Full Time In-Person School

There is no remote option for school this year. Please refer to the DESE COVID-19 guidance issued on May 27, 2021, page 4: [DESE COVID GUIDANCE](#)

*Important excerpt from the guidance: **Districts will no longer be able to offer remote learning as a standard learning model. As noted above, districts and schools will be required to be in-person, full-time, five days a week this fall.***

The district will follow already existing protocols for students who may miss an extended period of time due to illness, and the student will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to make up any missed work. If schoolwork or texts must be picked up from the school, the family member who comes must not be someone who is quarantining due to exposure.

Families who do not send their children to MPS must either homeschool their child, enroll in an approved Commonwealth Virtual School, or enroll them in a private school.

Masking

All students, staff and visitors have to wear a mask inside our school buildings and on our busses this fall. Face-masks are not required: (1) when outside; or (2) when an individual is working alone in a cubicle, classroom, or their own office.

This requirement is based off the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the CDC, and was made after consultation with the local Board of Health.

We need to stress that passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses. In addition, all MPS school buses must have windows open at all times. For more information, here is the [CDC's Order](#). This is a federal requirement.

As stated above, this policy is intended to maintain attendance for as many students as possible, and to reduce interruptions to school as much as possible.

Physical Distancing

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has removed any mandates regarding physical distancing.

We will do our best to maintain some physical distance when eating and use our best judgements to maintain some physical distancing requirements in classrooms for the upcoming school year. There is no strict six foot distancing in any of our facilities moving forward.

The use of masks as a mitigation strategy will prevent many students from being quarantined as a close contact exposure from a student or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Vaccines will play a major role in determining the length of time that we operate under these guidelines and protocols. As state guidance suggests, vaccines are the way to end masking in schools. DESE and DPH are recommending that 80% of staff and students be vaccinated to end mask mandates, and this will require us to improve upon our existing vaccinations as of Aug. 25th 2021.

Quarantine and Close Contacts

The district will follow the state requirements for quarantining of individuals who test positive or who are deemed to be a close contact of a positive individual, as described in detail at [MASS DESE PROTOCOLS](#). This includes the following guidelines:

1. An individual who is diagnosed with COVID-19 must quarantine for 10 days from the onset of symptoms (or positive test if asymptomatic). They may return to school after 10 days without a fever and other symptoms have sufficiently resolved.
2. A close contact remains defined as either someone who is within six feet of a positive individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more in one day. However, the following are exempted from being defined as a close contact for testing and quarantining protocols:
 - Individuals who are fully vaccinated and asymptomatic
 - Classroom contacts where both individuals were masked and 3' apart
 - Bus close contacts where students were wearing masks, and bus windows were open
 - Any individual who has had COVID-19 in the last 90 days and are asymptomatic
3. Close contacts who are asymptomatic but not vaccinated may continue to attend school if they participate in the **“Test and Stay”** protocol, where individuals are tested daily for seven days from date of exposure using a rapid antigen test at school. Students who test negative using this **“Test and Stay”** protocol may stay at school.
4. Close contacts who are asymptomatic but not vaccinated and who do not participate in **“Test and Stay”** will need to remain home on quarantine for at least seven days (returning on the eighth day if they have a negative COVID test and no symptoms; if no test, returning on the eleventh day if no symptoms).
5. Any individual who is symptomatic, whether vaccinated or not, and who is not a close contact, must remain out of school while they have symptoms. The individual may then return if they receive a negative COVID test, is given an alternative diagnosis by a health professional, have improvement of symptoms, and is fever-free for 24 hours.

HVAC and Ventilation

Ventilation is one of the important layers of mitigation to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The district, in collaboration with the DPW, will continue its practices that were in place last year. The district, with support from the City, has conducted consistent testing of our facilities to make sure this important mitigation strategy is operating. This includes maximizing fresh air exchange through HVAC systems; opening windows wherever possible; and providing air purifiers as needed when we see the need to improve upon a workspace in the district. In addition, the district will be recommending that we invest our federal dollars into improving the HVAC at several locations throughout the district to create a lasting investment for the students and staff.

Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene and hand washing will continue to be emphasized, and hand sanitizer will be readily available in locations throughout the school.

Visitors

We will require all visitors to wear a mask while indoors until the School Committee removes the masking policy. We appreciate our volunteers and ask for patience as we get back in the beginning of the year- an important time to establish classroom routines and rules.

School Events

We will be approving school events with indoor masking requirements while our policy is in place. Events that typically have larger audiences may be modified.

Athletics

We look forward to watching our panthers compete on the field this fall, and indoors on the court. Please note that indoor athletic competitions will follow the mask policy at MHS. For any outdoor contests, there is no masking required for participants or audience.

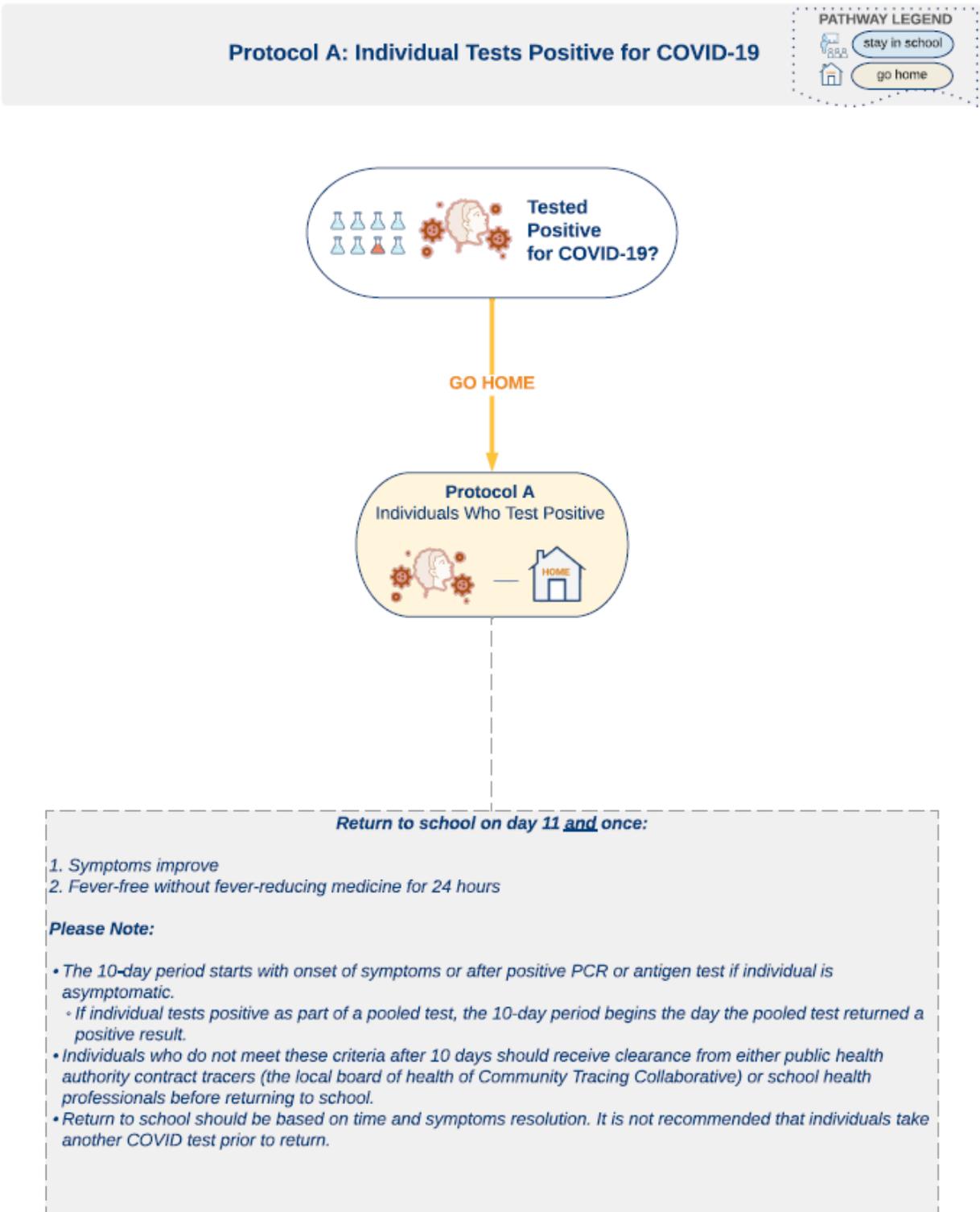
Food Service

A reminder that both breakfast and lunch are available for all students, and there is **no cost** for the breakfast and lunch food service program in Marlborough.

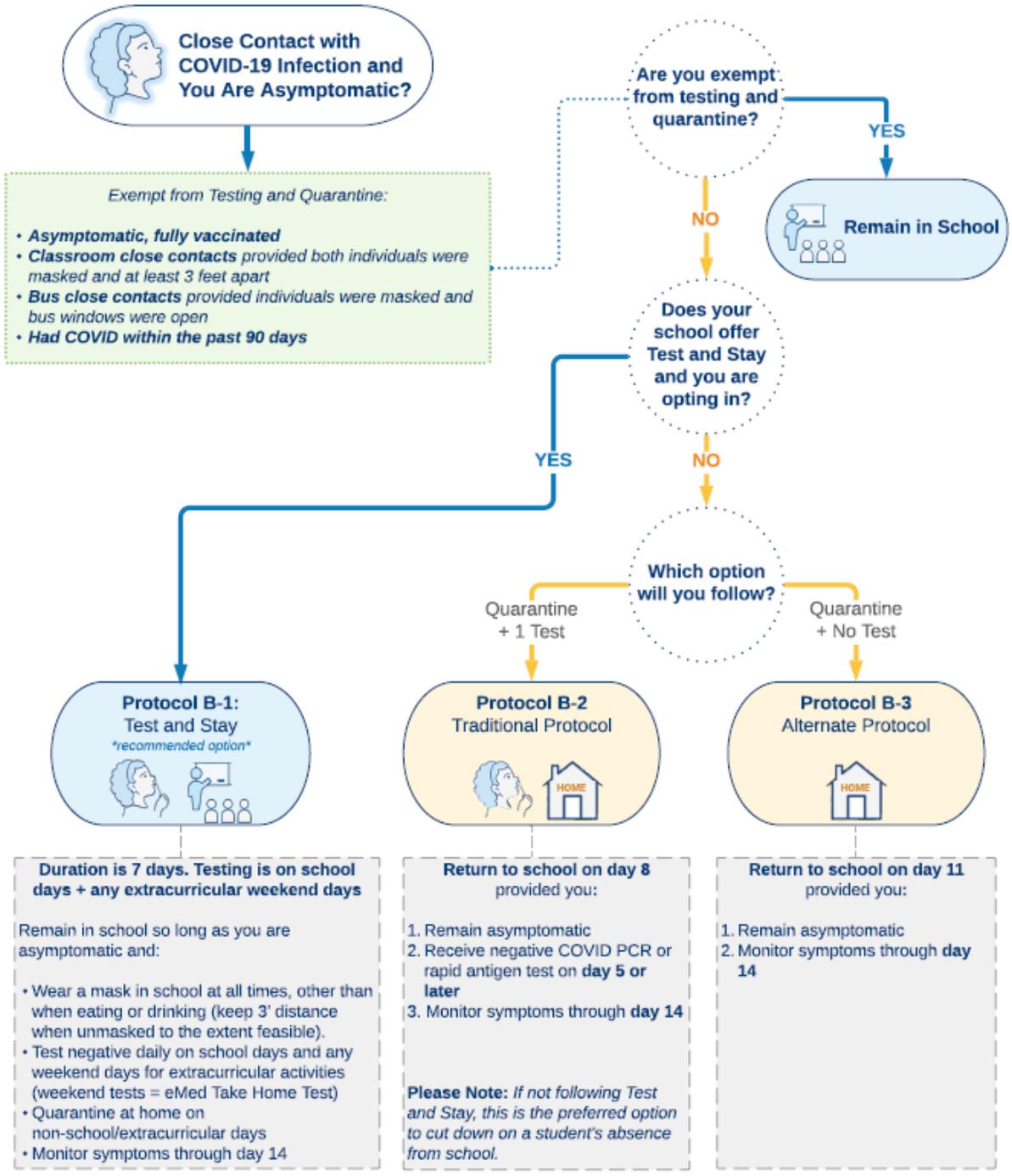
Transportation

Bus routes will be posted the week of Aug. 23-27. Questions about transportation can be directed to Steve Phalen at 508-460-3509 x13815 or by email sphalen@mps-edu.org.

A decision tree for ease of use in determining exposures and close contacts.

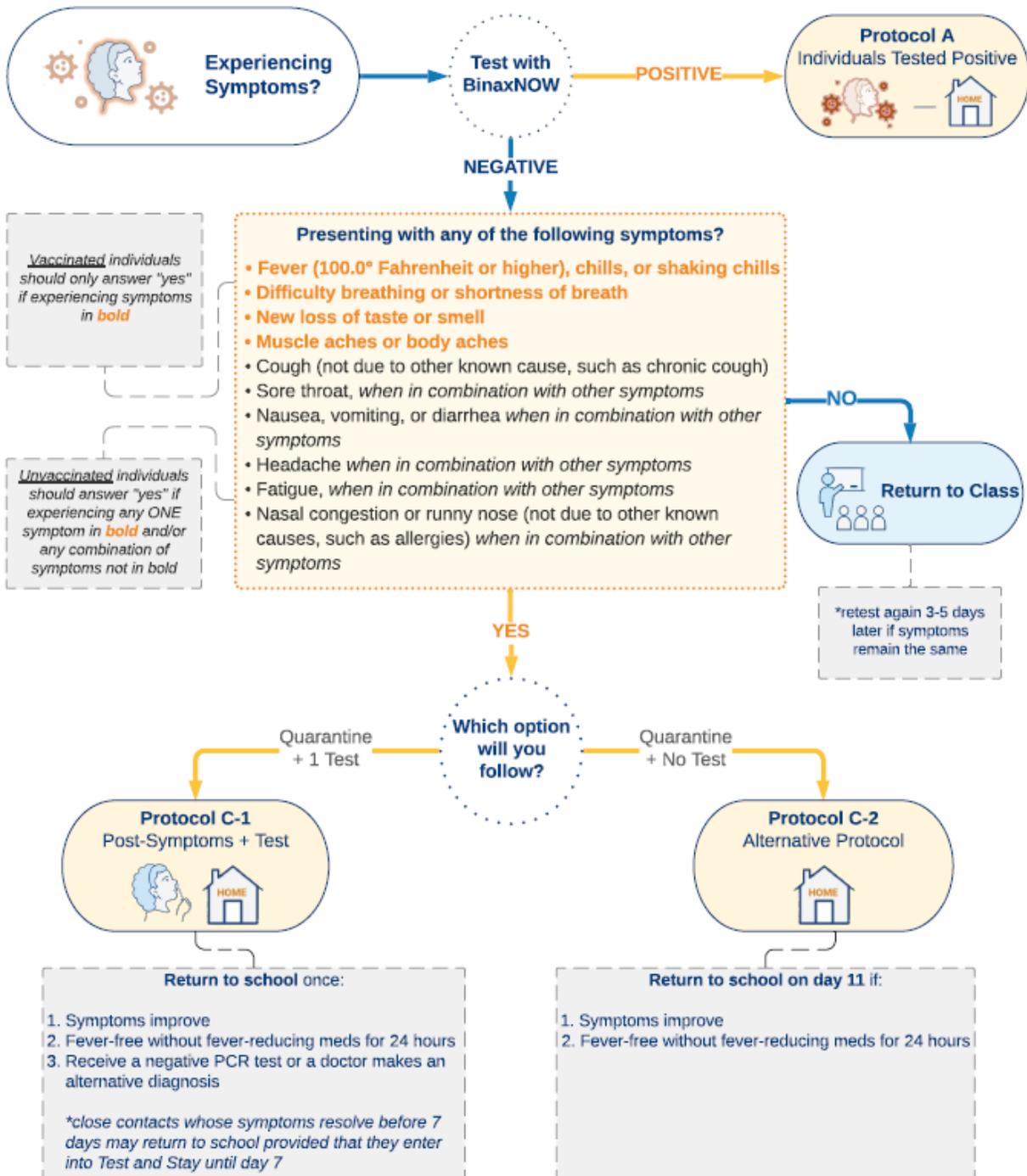
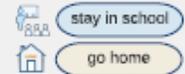


Protocol B: Asymptomatic Close Contacts



Protocol C: Symptomatic Individuals at School

PATHWAY LEGEND



<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/testing/>