

COVID-19 POLICY & PROCEDURES

The Banner School is committed to providing a safe and healthful environment for staff and students. The Banner School remains in compliance with all state and local health authority requirements on recording and reporting related information and cases on campus. The pandemic is an ongoing and constantly evolving situation, and The Banner School will continue to revise and update our policies and procedures as new information and data become available.

DISCLAIMER

COVID-19 is a highly communicable illness believed to be spread through close personal contact. The school has implemented reasonable preventative protocols, policies and procedures designed to reduce potential transmission on campus. Despite these protocols, there are inherent risks associated with being on campus. Those who come onto campus for any reason acknowledge and voluntarily assume these risks.

PREVENTION

Mitigation

- Hand Sanitizer is available at all entrances to the school, in all common areas and classrooms where activity or instruction take place.
- All persons are encouraged to wash and sanitize their hands when entering campus and regularly throughout the day. Teachers are also encouraged to regularly wash and sanitize desks, doorknobs, and other shared surfaces in their classrooms.
- Shared outdoor spaces for instructional activities are available and may be utilized to assist in minimizing risks related to close, indoor contact as deemed reasonable and appropriate by teachers and staff.

Vaccination

Vaccination and staying up to date with boosters/vaccines is strongly encouraged for all persons eligible for the Covid-19 vaccine.

- The CDC recommends a primary series of vaccines for everyone ages 6 months and older, and COVID-19 boosters for everyone ages 5 years and older, if eligible.
- The Banner School is proud to report a 100% Covid-19 vaccination rate among our faculty and administrative staff.

Masking Policy

Generally speaking, the decision for any individual to mask is based on personal preference and should be informed by personal assessment of risk. Anyone that feels comfortable masking is welcome to do so at any time. Masks are not required except within the context of the policy outlined below.

Masks are required to be worn when any of the following occur:

- When an individual has been identified as a close contact or household family member of a person who has tested positive for Covid-19. In this case, masks must be worn for 10 days following the last day of contact with the positive individual.
 - Please note that if students test positive for Covid their classmates are considered to be 'borderline' close-contacts, and the entire class will be encouraged (not required) to mask for 10 days following the last date of exposure within the classroom.
- When an individual presents to the health room with any symptoms of Covid-19 they will be required to mask. In this situation, a mask may be provided, if available.
- When an individual presents any ongoing or lingering respiratory symptoms, such as regular coughing and/or runny nose, for any reason, they may be asked to mask while indoors and/or in close proximity to other students/staff members. The school does not provide masks for use in this situation.
- It is recommended that students keep at least one spare mask in their backpacks, which can be available to them should the need for one arise.

Surveys and Information Gathering

In order to remain current in our informational assessment around the needs of our campus community, The Banner School may periodically send out surveys requesting information on vaccination status. Participating in these surveys is voluntary. The information gathered via these surveys enable us to be more effective in our ongoing reviews and updates to our policies. It is requested that everyone participate in the survey, to ensure those efforts are as successful as possible.

RESPONDING TO SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

COVID-19 symptoms include the following:

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| ● Cough | ● Fatigue | ● Sore Throat |
| ● Diarrhea | ● New Loss of Taste | ● Nausea or Vomiting |
| ● Difficulty Breathing/
Shortness of Breath | ● Sudden onset of
severe headache | ● Fever of 100.4 or
higher |

Presentation of Symptoms at Home

- Students exhibiting any possible symptoms of COVID-19 should not come to school.
- Please email attendance@bannerschool.org with an explanation of symptoms and when they started.
- Students must obtain either 1) a negative home test or 2) a doctor's note before returning to school. Keep in mind that even with clearance to return to school, a student experiencing any lingering respiratory symptoms will be required to mask until symptoms have resolved.

Presentation of Symptoms on Campus

- Any person that presents to the Health Room with any possible symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home. Students must be picked up within 30 minutes of notification.

- Please note that families must have identified and designated at least 1 emergency contact, listed within their student's profile, that can be available to pick up the student within the 30-minute pick-up window in the event that a parent/guardian are unable to do so themselves.

RESPONDING TO CONFIRMED DIAGNOSIS OR KNOWN EXPOSURE

Confirmed Positive Cases of COVID-19

- Any person that tests positive for COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status must immediately notify the school, and stay home to isolate for a minimum of 5 days
- Individuals may not return to campus until after a minimum of 5 days has passed AND they meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - They have received a negative PCR test and/or a doctor's note clearing them to return OR
 - They have performed 2 Covid home tests at least 24 hours apart, with both tests resulting as negative OR
 - They are fever and symptom free (without medication) for at least 24 hours
- If the individual returns to campus before a full 10 days has passed since diagnosis, the individual will be required to mask through Day 10. If the individual presents with any lingering respiratory symptoms, they will be required to continue masking beyond 10 days in all indoor classroom areas until all symptoms have resolved.

Known Exposure to Close Contact with Positive Diagnosis

- Any person who comes into close contact with another person who has tested positive for COVID-19 will need to test before returning to school, and then test again after 3-5 days.
 - "Close Contact" is defined as a family member or individual sharing the same household.
 - Please note that classmates within the same grade/homeroom cohort are considered 'borderline' close contacts, and are encouraged to take the same response measures as a close contact would.
- If the individual remains asymptomatic, they may continue to attend school, however they will be required to wear a mask on campus for the full 10 days following the last date of contact with the positive individual.

REPORTING PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

- All positive cases must be reported to the school, as The Banner School is required to report all cases to the Health Department. Any identifying information is kept confidential.
- The Banner School will notify families of any confirmed positive cases within their own child's classroom, or in the event there is a larger outbreak within the classroom or school community. Identifying student or family information is kept confidential and will not be shared.
- All absences relating to any symptoms, exposure, and/or related medical documentation (such as test results) should be sent to attendance@bannerschool.com.

COVID-19 SYMPTOM FAQ:

We are fully vaccinated. My child has a runny nose, cough but no fever. Can my child attend school today?

We would recommend that your child stay home, and test for COVID-19. If the test is negative and they do not have a fever of/over 100.4, then they may return to school, however they will be required to mask until the runny nose / cough symptoms resolve completely.

My child has allergies and is coughing, but this isn't Covid! Do they have to mask?

We understand! They will not need to mask, as long as a doctor's note verifying the diagnosis is provided. You can email this documentation to attendance@bannerschool.org. Unfortunately, out of an abundance of caution, *without* that documentation your child will be required to mask if they are regularly exhibiting any respiratory symptoms for any reason.

Do I need a PCR test for them to be able to return?

No, home tests are fine! You can obtain free tests through Frederick County Public Libraries, as well as the Frederick County Health Department. We also have tests available in our front office.

My child started having cold symptoms yesterday, and today they have a low fever. Covid test is negative. What should I do?

Your child will need to stay home until they are fever/symptom free without medication for at least 24 hours. We recommend re-testing for Covid again 48 hours after the onset of symptoms.

My child has tested positive for Covid. When can they return to school?

They will need to stay home and isolate for at least 5 days. (Day 1 is the day they tested positive, so they will need to isolate for Days 1-5.) They may return to class as early as Day 6, provided that they are symptom/fever free for at least 24 hours and have obtained the necessary negative Covid test(s) – either 1 negative PCR test, OR 2 negative home tests taken 24 hours apart. Upon returning, they will be required to mask on campus through Day 10, or until all respiratory symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.

A member of our household has tested positive for Covid, but my child feels fine. Is it okay for them to come to school?

Yes, provided they are not experiencing any symptoms and will be masking on campus. They are considered a close contact, and a mask will be required on campus for 10 days following the last day of exposure to that member of your household while they were infected. We recommend performing a Covid home test every 2-3 days until the end of those 10 days.

I have been informed another student in my child's classroom has Covid. What happens now?

In the event of a confirmed positive case within your child's classroom, we will encourage all students in the classroom to voluntarily mask for 10 days following the last date of known exposure within the classroom, however it is not required. Parents will be notified of any positive cases in their child's class.

Another child on my child's swim team has tested positive for Covid. What do I need to do?

Nothing. Interactions with friends, team-mates and other individuals outside of the home are not considered close contacts for the purposes of this policy.