PROPOSED STRATEGY TO REDUCE QUARANTINE AWAY FROM SCHOOL

Screen and Stay

Allow students and staff who are **unvaccinated or partially vaccinated** to remain in school after close contact with a COVID-19 case, provided:

1. The only contact occurred during the school day (*no extracurricular or social contact*)

2. If indoors or on a school bus or other transportation, both the contact and the case were masked during exposure

3. If outdoors, masked or unmasked but staff supervised (*e.g., mask breaks, PE, recess*)

4. The Contact remains asymptomatic (*any symptoms revert to regular isolation/quarantine*)
Examples of close contact scenarios that would not support a *Screen and Stay* approach would be:

1. Contact with a case during interscholastic or other athletic activities (*other than during supervised Physical Education*)

2. Contact occurring during social interactions or similar activities outside of school (*e.g., birthday parties, dining out, sleepovers*)

3. Contact where the case or contact is not consistently and correctly wearing a mask indoors (*e.g., eating, wind instrument playing*) and 6 ft. distance is not maintained

4. Household contacts (*i.e., the contact lives with the case*)

5. The contact cannot consistently and correctly wear a mask (*and cannot be provided appropriate alternative protective strategies*) or cannot perform daily symptom screening
Screen and Stay (cont.)

In order to remain in the Screen and Stay protocol, the following should apply:

1. If the student/staff is unvaccinated or partially vaccinated (i.e., started COVID-19 series but not yet completed), they must affirm that:
   a) they have read and understand the Screen and Stay requirements
   b) that they intend to screen for symptoms each day prior to school for 14 calendar days
   c) that they intend to remain home and notify the school if symptoms develop

2. Screen and Stay applies to in-person learning only, and regular quarantine procedures should continue to be used for athletics, extracurriculars, and other activities outside of the school day.

3. Individuals in this protocol should not participate in aerosol-generating activities while in school (e.g., Phys. Ed., wind instrument playing, choir/singing, projected speech) and schools should provide alternative programming for affected students for the duration of the Screen and Stay period.
**Why Screen and Stay now?**

- Frequent repeated quarantines are negatively affecting learning and burdening families
- Provides immediate relief without extensive operational planning
- Temporary solution for remainder of Fall while vaccines roll-out for 5–11-year-old students
- Community case rates are stable-to-decreasing
- Mitigation strategies inside schools in CT are very strong and compliance is high
- Documented transmission inside school buildings has been infrequent
- Benefits of in-person learning likely outweigh any increased risk of transmission, especially among masked and asymptomatic students

**Why not Test and Stay?**

- Operational planning involved would significantly delay relief (weeks-to-months), with likely equity impacts
- Cost and staff time/burnout burden on school districts (makes adoption less likely)
- Supply chain for rapid antigen tests and other supplies is currently strained
- Operationalizing Test and Stay unlikely to outpace vaccine roll-out for 5–11-year-old students
- CLIA waivers, parental consent to testing, and results reporting
- Project COVID DeteCT already operating serial testing in some CT schools
Screen and Stay is offered as an option for school districts, not required.

Even if a school district is implementing Screen and Stay, the protocol is still optional for staff/students/families. Contacts can opt to quarantine at home if they prefer.

In the guidance document, “Addendum 5” refers to the current isolation/quarantine guidance DPH/CSDE have provided to school districts (i.e., “regular” procedures).