



WEST LONG BRANCH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

135 Locust Avenue
West Long Branch, NJ 07764
TELEPHONE: (732) 222-5900 FAX: (732) 222-9325

Mrs. Christina M. Egan
Superintendent of Schools

May 4, 2021

Dear West Long Branch Families,

As we approach the home stretch of this unusual school year, I am writing to you with a few important updates:

Updated COVID-19 Contact Tracing Protocols

I am very excited to share that our local and state COVID numbers continue to move in the right direction, and last week's NJ COVID Activity Level Index (CALI) report now shows the whole state of New Jersey in the Moderate (yellow) level.

The WLB Pandemic Response Team met recently to discuss our current close contact tracing protocols. Until now, our practice has been to quarantine cohorts of individuals when there is a confirmed positive. Now, with declining case rates, increased community vaccination rates, and no evidence of any in-school transmission here in WLB, we have reached the point where we can take the next step for our contact tracing protocols. Effective immediately:

Determination of Close Contacts/Quarantined Individuals: Classroom seating charts will be referenced to determine the classroom locations of individual(s) who have tested positive, and to identify their close contacts within a given classroom or learning environment. Those seated in immediate proximity to the positive individual (in front of, behind, to either side) will be considered to be close contacts, as will anyone identified of having been within six (6) feet, for more than fifteen (15) minutes, with or without a mask, of any individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing will begin with seating charts but will also continue to entail conversation and investigation with relevant parties and the health department.

Quarantine/Communication Protocols:

- **Close contacts** will be identified and notified of their requirement to quarantine for the 14-day period.
- Families of all students in the cohort/classroom who are **NOT** required to quarantine will be contacted and advised that individual(s) have tested positive within a given classroom/cohort but that their child is NOT required to quarantine, based on distance within the classroom/cohort.
- Families will be given the option to allow their non-quarantined children to attend school in person or to move to virtual instruction, based upon individual health needs and personal safety preferences.
- The district, in consultation with the health department, will still retain the oversight to make a more significant quarantine decision if it is determined to be necessary. For example, in cases where transmission rates are high or contact-tracing is not possible (some specials, cohort-mixing, etc.)
- Depending on the time of day that the district is informed of the positive case (for instance, in the evening), it may be necessary to temporarily move the full cohort to virtual instruction until the district can complete contact tracing.



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Updated 2020-2021 School Calendar

On April 27, 2021, the Board of Education approved two important changes to our 2020-2021 school calendar.

First, since the district engaged in virtual instruction instead of using a snow day, one snow day has been added back to our school calendar. As a result, school will be closed for all staff and students on Friday, May 28th, 2021.

The second change to our calendar is a shift in the 8th Grade Graduation date. 8th Grade Graduation will now take place on June 16th, 2021, with a rain date of June 17th, 2021. The last day of school for all staff and students remains June 18th, 2021. Further details about graduation will be forthcoming.

Important Upcoming Dates	
Friday, May 28, 2021	School Closed (Snow Day/Memorial Day Weekend)
Monday, May 31, 2021	School Closed (Memorial Day)
Wednesday, June 16, 2021	8 th Grade Graduation
Thursday, June 17, 2021	8 th Grade Graduation (Rain Date)
Friday, June 18, 2021	Last Day of School for Students and Staff

Staff Appreciation Week

Last, and most certainly not least, I would be remiss not to mention that this week is Staff Appreciation Week! I know I don't need to tell you how incredibly hardworking, dedicated, caring, and fabulous our West Long Branch staff members are...you and your children see it every day! If you have a chance this week, please consider taking a moment to let our fantastic teachers and staff that you see the difference they make every day!

Sincerely,

Christina Egan
Superintendent of Schools