

**WHITEHALL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
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**Whitehall – Birthplace of the U. S. Navy – [www.railroaders.net](http://www.railroaders.net)**

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Dear Whitehall Community,

Our faculty and staff are very excited to welcome back all of our students for the 2022-2023 school year! To help you prepare for your child's first day back, we wanted to share with you the latest update from New York State (NYS) regarding their guidance for schools in managing COVID-19 during the upcoming school year. These new guidelines are aligned with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC)'s movement away from strict mitigation measures.

The full information can be accessed on the [New York State website](#), but the bullet points below will help you understand the impact on all of us as we return to school:

- **In-person instruction will be provided for all students.**
- **Masks and face coverings are optional**, and we continue to respect the decisions by students and staff on whether they choose to wear a mask or not.
  - Masks are not required on school buses.
  - The NYS Department of Health recommends that individuals should wear a mask during days 6-10 after testing positive for COVID-19.
- **Quarantines are no longer required for close contacts.** Please continue to monitor your child for COVID-19 symptoms and have them stay home when sick.
- **Isolation after testing positive for COVID-19** is still in place. The isolation period may vary based on COVID-19 symptoms.
  - Please continue to report any positive cases so we can help your family navigate the absence and help your child to continue their learning.
- **School districts are no longer required to conduct contact tracing or report positive COVID-19 test results on a daily basis** to the NYS Department of Health.
- **Physical distancing is no longer recommended**, so student activities and groupings will return to their pre-pandemic norms.
- **Children who become sick at school will be evaluated by the school nurse.** As has always been the process, ill students will be sent home from school. Parents will be offered a COVID test to take home should you wish to obtain one.
- **We will have COVID-19 home tests from New York State available.** Families who would like to receive a test should make a request to your child's main office and a test will be sent home with them. Or you may pick up a test in the main office of your child's school.

We thank you for taking the time to read this information so that you can help your child or children as they begin the school year, and we join you in looking forward to regaining a greater sense of normalcy in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

  
Patrick Dee  
Superintendent