



Dear EASTCONN Students, Families and Staff,

December 22, 2021

As the holidays are upon us, we wanted to take this time to wish you all the true gifts of the season. December is often characterized as the season of lights. No matter what holiday you celebrate - Christmas, Hanukkah, the winter solstice, Kwanzaa – all have one thing in common: they all incorporate light. It is no coincidence that these winter holidays light the darkest days of winter. Unfortunately, the holidays also have the potential to let us down. Caught in the frenzy of the season, we sometimes miss the light. This year, thanks to vaccinations, we have the good fortune to return to celebrating together with those we care about, giving us the greatest gift of all.

As new COVID-19 variants continue to surface, we ask that you take the following precautions over the holiday break and throughout the winter months to ensure the safety of everyone. It is our hope that with your conscious efforts and our layered mitigation strategies in school, we will be able to have a safe return in January, with minimal disruptions due to COVID-19, ensuring learning continuity.

1. Consider testing before gathering with family.
2. Wear a mask when gathering with those not in your immediate family household.
3. As difficult as it is, stay home if you have signs of any infectious illness, and see your healthcare provider for testing and care.
4. When a case of COVID-19 is identified in a student or school staff person, contact tracing begins immediately. If a student, family member or staff is identified with COVID-19 over the break, please contact your principal and/or school nurse. It is important for us to know of any cases or exposures for contact tracing and for coordinating appropriate return dates for attendance purposes.
5. Unvaccinated people exposed to COVID-19 individuals are identified as close contacts, must stay at home to quarantine for 10 days since last exposure, and may return to normal activity on day 11, if symptom-free. However, daily symptom monitoring is necessary for an additional 4 days (days 11–14).
6. Fully vaccinated people who have come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 should be tested 5-7 days following the date of their exposure and wear a mask in indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. If possible, isolate from the COVID-19 positive individual if living in the same household.
7. If you are traveling, please follow the CDC guidelines found here: <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus/travel>.

EASTCONN continues to implement layered prevention strategies to protect students, teachers, staff and other household members to support in-person learning. We hope you will do the same over the break to ensure a safe return to school.

However your family celebrates the holidays, let there be light.

I hope you all enjoy the true gifts of the season – peace, love, joy and good health.

See you in 2022!

Diane Dugas, Director of Leading and Learning