



August 25, 2022

Dear Students and Families,

I hope you are having a terrific summer with family and friends. As the sights and sounds of the State Fair start this week, we are officially less than two weeks away from the 2022-2023 school year. We can't wait to get students back into the buildings!

As we embark on this new school year, the safety and health of our students, staff and school community remains our number one priority. Certainly we are in a much different place relative to COVID-19 at this point in time than we were the previous two years preparing to open school. With increased access to information, vaccination, testing, and treatment, updated guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) gives schools much more flexibility.

***The first day of school for students at Westhill is Tuesday, September 6th.*** We are following the updated guidance from the [CDC](#) and [NYSDOH](#) which aligns with our goal of keeping students in school while promoting the health of our school community.

Here are the highlights from the updated guidance which we are following:

- Masks are optional.
- Masks are recommended to be worn when an individual is symptomatic.
- Testing is recommended for individuals with symptoms as soon as possible after the symptoms begin.
- Positive individuals should isolate at home for 5 days and wear a mask upon return through day 10.
- Quarantine is no longer recommended for individuals exposed to COVID-19.
- Exposed individuals are encouraged to wear a mask for 10 days in public indoor settings and test if symptoms develop or after day 5 of exposure.
- Encourage students and staff to stay home when sick.

If you have not done so already, we strongly encourage all eligible students, staff and community members to get vaccinated as soon as possible. COVID vaccination appointments are available through [Onondaga County](#). It's important to note that the aforementioned guidance applies to all illness and infectious disease, not just COVID-19. Keeping students home when they are sick, promoting good hygiene and following the guidance above are important to help mitigate all viruses from spreading in our schools. If we all do our part and work together to care for one another, we can minimize the impact of COVID-19, the flu, and anything else that comes our way.

For more detailed information please check out this [FAQ document](#) from the Department of Health.

Thank you for your continued support of our students and staff, and for doing your part to help keep all members of the Westhill community safe and healthy.

Continued Success,  
Stephen R. Dunham  
Superintendent of Schools  
[sdunham@westhillschools.org](mailto:sdunham@westhillschools.org)  
Twitter: @SdunhamWesthill