



# ACADEMY HILL

Est. 1986

PreK-8

## 2021 – 2022 COVID-19 Safety Protocols

### All Students and Staff

(Academy Hill strongly recommends that all eligible students and staff are vaccinated as soon as possible. As of 8/1/2021, all staff is fully vaccinated. As of January 5, 2022, all staff have received a booster shot.)

#### Masking

~~Required indoors; optional outdoors.~~

~~Note: Masks should meet the suggested requirements found on the Massachusetts state COVID-19 website (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements>). Students and staff may wear disposable, three-layer masks or reusable cloth masks.~~

~~**UPDATE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 5, UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE: ONLY SURGICAL, KN95 OR N95 MASKS ARE PERMISSIBLE AT THIS TIME.**~~

~~If choosing a reusable cloth mask, it should:~~

- ~~• Cover your nose and mouth,~~
- ~~• Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,~~
- ~~• Be secured with ties or ear loops,~~
- ~~• Include multiple layers of fabric,~~
- ~~• Allow for breathing without restriction, and~~
- ~~• Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.~~

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	<p><del>When putting on and taking off a mask, do not touch the front of it, you should only handle the ties or ear straps, and make sure you wash the cloth mask regularly. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after touching the mask.</del></p> <p><del>Gaiters and bandanas are no longer permissible.</del></p> <p><b>MASKS ARE NOW OPTIONAL FOR ALL STUDENTS. (SEE EXCEPTIONS BELOW.)</b></p>
Vaccines	<p>All adults (18+) entering the school building for an event must show either proof of full vaccination OR a negative PCR test administered within the 48 hours prior to the visit.</p>
Testing	<p>Please see the addendum for test protocol. Academy Hill will participate in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education/CIC Health symptomatic and “test and stay” testing programs, if approved and available. Consent for participation is required.</p> <p>Note: As of January 31, 2022 (contingent upon availability of test kits), Academy Hill will participate in the revised MA DESE/DPH at-home antigen test program. We will no longer contact trace in school. We will continue participation in the state symptomatic test program. Families must opt-in for both the at-home and the symptomatic test programs.</p>
Distancing	<p>Maximum distance will be observed in each classroom, within a structured environment. Appropriate distance will be encouraged while outdoors.</p>
Cohorts	<p><del>Each lower school grade level and the middle school are considered cohorts. Cohorts that have reached a critical mass of vaccinated students may mix indoors.</del></p>

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	<i>Academy Hill's COVID Response Team will determine when a cohort has reached a critical mass of vaccinated students, and may then adopt this practice.</i>
Contact Tracing, Quarantine, and Isolation	In the event of a positive COVID-19 case on campus, Academy Hill will use contact tracing, quarantining, and isolation, in accordance with state guidelines, at a minimum, but may exceed those guidelines as determined by the COVID Response Team and as conditions warrant. Please see the addendum for current MINIMUM guidance.
Hand Washing	Required for all upon entry to the building and throughout the school day.
Health Monitoring	All members of the community are encouraged to stay home when feeling ill.
Snacks/Lunch	Food is to be consumed outdoors whenever possible. If not possible to eat outside, food will be consumed in classrooms. <del>If snacks or lunch are taken indoors, talking is to be kept to a minimum until a critical vaccination mass is reached.</del>
Ventilation	Academy Hill will maintain use of Medify Air filters throughout the building. Windows will be left open to maximize air flow in populated areas.

~~Additional notes: Students may resume use of cubbies and lockers, but will visit these common areas only while masked and for a defined time during the day. Students and staff may resume the use of the Art, Music, French and Spanish rooms. Latin/Classics classes will be conducted in homerooms. At this time, singing may take place outdoors only, and while students are spaced 10 feet apart. Students should bring their camp or beach chairs to school on the first day of classes, as we will continue to utilize our outdoor classroom spaces as often as possible.~~

~~At this time, the Good Morning Show program will continue to take place in student homerooms. Parent observers are not permitted. The before and after school programs will continue to operate as pre-paid, registration only this year.~~

**Parents/Guardians/Visitors**

**(by appointment only)**

Tours/Visits	<del>To be conducted after school hours only, unless arranged with Head of School.</del>
Health Screening	Required of all visitors for entry, with option to provide vaccination status.
Masking	<del>Required indoors; optional outdoors.</del>
Contact Tracing, Quarantine, and Isolation	In the event of a positive COVID-19 case on campus, Academy Hill will use contact tracing, quarantining, and isolation, in accordance with state guidelines, at a minimum. We reserve the right to exceed minimum guidelines as conditions might indicate and as recommended by the COVID Response Team. Please see attached addendum for minimum guidelines.
Hand Washing	Required for all upon entry to the building and throughout the school day.

**COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM**

Academy Hill Staff:

Melissa Earls, Head of School *ex officio*  
David Wells, Chair of the Board of Trustees *ex officio*  
Kelli Brodhagen, Director of Administration  
Christopher Zaluga, Director of Finance  
Danielle Mazur, Lead Teacher

Healthcare Advisors:

Kelly Binnall  
Dayna Campbell  
Christopher Dow  
Priya Malik  
Jacob Smith  
Anupama Thambi

## Symptoms, Contact Tracing and Quarantine Protocol

**Please note that these are minimum requirements and may be adjusted by the Academy Hill COVID Response Team as determined to be necessary to ensure the continued health and safety of our community.**

This addendum outlines the list of COVID-19 symptoms, provides the definition of a close contact, and outlines situations where close contacts are exempt from COVID-19 testing and quarantine response protocols including isolation, quarantine, and Test and Stay (if available).

### **Section 1: COVID-19 symptoms**

*COVID-19 symptoms list:*

- **Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills**
- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Sore throat, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea when in combination with other symptoms
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

### **Section 2: Definition of a close contact**

Close contacts are defined as individuals who have been within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual while indoors, for at least 15 minutes during a 24-hour period. Please note that the at-risk exposure time begins 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or time of positive test if asymptomatic) and continues until the time the COVID-19 positive individual is isolated. In general, close contacts should follow the testing and quarantine response protocols in Section 2 of this document. However, certain close contacts are exempted from testing and quarantine response protocols as noted below.

*Close contacts who are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols*

The following close contacts are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols:

- Asymptomatic, fully vaccinated close contacts: Individuals who are asymptomatic and fully vaccinated are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.
- Classroom close contacts: An individual who is exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual in the classroom **while both individuals were masked, so long as the individuals were spaced at least 3 feet apart**, is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.

- Carpool close contacts: Individuals in vehicles must be masked according to federal requirements. **As such, individuals who are masked in vehicles when windows are open are exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols.**
- Close contacts who have had COVID-19 within the past 90 days: An individual who has been previously diagnosed with COVID-19 and then becomes a close contact of someone with COVID-19 is exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols if: 1) The exposure occurred within 90 days of the onset of their own illness AND 2) The exposed individual is recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms.

Note: To be a close contact, the 15 minutes must occur within a 24-hour period. Multiple brief or transitory interactions (less than a minute) throughout the day are unlikely to result in 15 minutes of cumulative contact and do not meet the definition of close contact.

### Same household positive protocol:

If a member of your student's household tests positive, you must test your student for 5 days following the same household positive test. As long as the student tests negative, s/he may come to school but must remain masked except when eating or drinking for 5 days following the positive test. If you require home tests, please let us know.

### **Section 3: Recommended testing and quarantine response protocols**

This section outlines testing and quarantine response protocols for individuals – students and staff – who test positive for COVID-19, close contacts who are not exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols, and symptomatic individuals. Each scenario outlines the duration of any recommended quarantine or isolation, the conditions to be met in order for the individual to return to school, and any additional considerations.

#### **Protocol : For individuals who test positive for COVID-19**

- Duration: Self-isolation for COVID-19 positive cases FOR UNVACCINATED INDIVIDUALS is a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset or after positive PCR or antigen test, if asymptomatic. For vaccinated: 5 days.
- Return to school: After 10 days (unvaccinated)/5 days (vaccinated) and once they have: 1) Been without fever for 24 hours (and without taking fever-reducing medications); and 2) Experienced improvement in other symptoms; and 3) Individuals who do not meet these criteria after 10 days may receive clearance from either public health authority contact tracers (the local board of health or Community Tracing Collaborative) or school health professional before returning to school.

Return to school should be based on time and symptom resolution.

#### **Alternate protocol for those who choose not to receive a COVID test**

- Duration: Quarantine is at least 10 days from the date of exposure
- Return to School: After 10 days, returning on day 11, provided that they: 1) Have not experienced symptoms up to this point, 2) Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14 and self-isolate if symptoms develop.

- Note: If an individual has symptoms at the time they are designated as a close contact or within the 14 days following initial exposure, they follow the protocol for symptomatic individuals (Protocol C). If an individual tests positive at any time, they follow the protocol for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 (Protocol A).

### ***Protocol for symptomatic individuals***

Protocol C applies to vaccinated and non-vaccinated individuals who experience the COVID19 symptoms listed in Section 1 applicable to their status.

### **Protocol C for symptomatic individuals:**

#### **Protocol C-1: Return to school post-symptoms with test**

- Duration: Dependent on symptom resolution
- Return to School: Individuals may return to school after they: 1) Have received a negative PCR test result for COVID-19, 2) Have improvement in symptoms, 3) Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Note: If the symptomatic individual was a close contact who is not exempt from testing and quarantine response protocols, after symptoms resolve and they receive a negative PCR test, they should follow Protocol B-1 for Test and Stay. If Test and Stay is not available or the family or adult individual opts not to participate, they follow Protocol B-2 or B-3.

As you are likely aware, we are experiencing an increase in cases of COVID-19 both at school and throughout many of our feeder communities. The members of the COVID Response Team, including our Health Advisory Committee members, met electronically this past weekend. Our consensus decision is to require all staff and students to test for COVID on their own within 48 hours of returning to Academy Hill on January 5th. The Health Advisors - including an infectious disease expert, pediatricians, and other medical and public health professionals - agree that our return from the holiday break will present a higher risk time than usual, due to extensive travel and to people gathering indoors. Academy Hill is, therefore, joining the members of its peer independent school group in requiring universal testing in some form after the extended break.

All staff and students must submit the results of a COVID-19 test prior to returning to school on January 5, regardless of their vaccination status.

We will accept the self-reported results of home tests, such as rapid antigen tests (e.g. BinaxNOW). PCR (i.e. molecular) testing will likely be in high demand due to holiday travel, so if you intend to obtain a PCR at a local "Stop the Spread" site or other facility, we strongly recommend that you get tested 48 hours before your desired return date and time. At home tests can be done the morning of the 5th, since they take under 30 minutes to show a result. If you have difficulty obtaining a home test, please reach out to us before the break and we will assist you.

If any student cannot test, or opts not to test, that student will be asked to quarantine from Sunday, Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>, through Sunday, Jan 9<sup>th</sup>. They will be readmitted without a negative test on Jan 10th.

**Click here for the test result portal:**

[LINK TO SELF-REPORT TEST RESULT PORTAL](#)

NOTE: Do not report results until the evening of January 4 or the morning of January 5, to ensure compliance with the protocol. Please save this email or bookmark the link to access the portal at the end of break.

While no mitigation strategy is perfect, the Response Team agrees this plan will serve to limit risk while allowing Academy Hill to maintain in person classes for as many students and teachers as possible.

**Revision as of January 31, 2022: Contingent upon timely arrival of at-home test kits, Academy Hill will participate in symptomatic and at-home antigen testing ONLY. We will discontinue asymptomatic contact-tracing, unless and until notified.**

No Cost At-Home Test Option Available Now!

Dear AHS Staff and Families:

At Academy Hill, keeping your students safe and in school is our top priority. We are writing to let you know, in accordance with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Public Health (DPH), our district is updating our COVID-19 Testing Program, effective later this month (contingent upon timely arrival of test kits). We are opting into an at-home testing program that will increase testing of our participating students and staff, **regardless of vaccination status**. For more information about this update to the statewide testing program, please [click here](#). The at-home testing option will begin the week of January 24 for staff and the week of January 31 for students, contingent upon the timely arrival of the state-sponsored test kits. In addition to this new at-home antigen test option, we will continue with our current symptomatic test program during the week. As part of this shift in the program, we are discontinuing Test and Stay and contact tracing for in-school close contacts. This means that if your child is a potential contact in school, they may continue to come to school and do not have to quarantine. This new at-home testing opportunity is voluntary and only those who opt-in will receive tests. We strongly encourage you to fill out the form as soon as possible to opt-in. If you have questions, please contact us.

#### [COVID-19 Testing Programs in our Schools:](#)

1. **At-Home Rapid Antigen Testing** due each Monday before your student(s) arrive at Academy Hill.
2. **Symptomatic Testing** (*If you have not yet signed up, [click here](#)*)

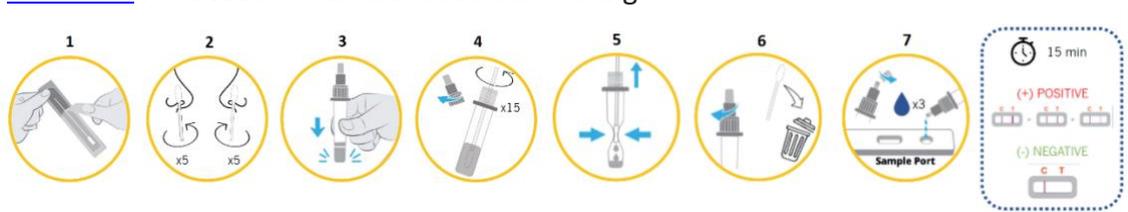
#### Overview: At-Home Rapid Testing Program

- **About the Test:** [iHealth](#) is a 15-minute at-home FDA-approved rapid antigen test

- **Opt-In:** To participate, you must opt in by completing the [LINK FOR AT-HOME TEST PARTICIPATION CONSENT](#). By opting in, you will agree to review the training materials for test administration, report positive test results to your student’s school, and administer the tests according to Academy Hill guidelines.
- **Weekly:** Every two weeks you will receive an iHealth at-home rapid test kit. Each kit contains two individual tests. Your student will administer one test each week on Sunday evening or Monday morning before student arrival.
- **Reporting Positive Test Results:** If your student tests positive on an at-home antigen test, you will inform their school of the positive result using the [SELF-REPORT FORM LINK HERE](#). The school will keep the results confidential and will not make individual results public. **In addition, it is strongly recommended that you inform your healthcare professional of the positive result.**
- **Easy, Free, and Flexible:** This test is administered at home (not at school), reducing the burden on school staff and time to administer tests and increasing a family’s flexibility to do testing in the home for free.

### How do I administer the test?

- [Click here](#) for a full “how to” written guide in various languages
- [Click here](#) for a video of an individual self-testing



### How do I submit results?

- **Submit Results:** You must submit positive test results to your student’s school. [CLICK HERE](#) to submit positive test your results.
- **Confidentiality:** Positive test results are shared with your school district for informational purposes only. Individual results will remain confidential, and they will never be made public.