



## PROTECT OUR PACK



# The Northwood School Plan for 2021-22

### Introduction

Northwood School will again provide an in-person academic, residential, and co-curricular program for the 2021–2022 academic year. COVID-19 is a serious global pandemic that threatens the health of those infected with the virus. But the virus has done more than make us sick. Students and their parents and teachers around the world are well-acquainted with the disruptive effects of the virus for school-age young people, even those who never test positive. This plan aims to stop the spread of the virus and to prevent the isolation of quarantines and cohorts, the interruption of learning and the suspension of athletic, artistic, and community pursuits we are all too familiar with.

Our plan is informed by the expert guidance provided by the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Policy Lab at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. It is implemented with the understanding of our local context as a remote and rural residential school where a vast majority of our students and staff are or will be fully vaccinated.

We believe our plan will allow us to fulfill our mission of fostering growth in young people so that they may engage in their world and lead lives of consequence and offer a life-changing educational opportunity for our students.

## Table of Contents

I. COVID-19 Vaccination Required of All Students .....	3
II. Recent Negative Test Required of All Students, Regardless of Vaccination Status.....	3
III. International Students.....	4
Quarantine Required of Students Not Fully Vaccinated Who Arrive from Outside the United States.....	4
Testing Before Travel .....	4
Vaccinations After Arrival .....	4
IV. Employees and Vaccination.....	4
V. Testing .....	5
VI. Positive Cases, Contact Tracing, and Testing Contacts .....	5
VII. Quarantine and Isolation .....	6
VIII. Emergency Contacts for Students Far from Home.....	6
X. Other Mitigation Plans .....	8
Daily Health Screenings .....	8
Sick or Symptomatic Students and Employees.....	8
Cleaning and Disinfecting .....	9
Physical Distancing .....	9
Dining Room and Foodservice .....	10
Ventilation .....	10
Fitness Center and Open Times on Indoor Turf Field .....	10
Co-Curricular and Other Student Activities.....	10
Weekend Leaves .....	10
Town Visits .....	11
XI. Guidance for Schools from Public Health Authorities.....	11

## **I. COVID-19 Vaccination Required of All Students**

Northwood School believes that vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Requiring the vaccination will help Northwood safely build a residential community consisting of students from around the world and return to full-time in-person learning as well as co-curricular activities and sports.

For the 2021-22 school year, Northwood School has added the COVID-19 vaccine to the list of required vaccinations. Students arriving at Northwood School from countries where they could not access the COVID-19 vaccine may matriculate and attend Northwood in the fall, but they are required to promptly receive the vaccine at a time and place arranged by the Northwood School Health Center. Certain medical exemptions for vaccine requirements may be permitted. All students who aren't fully vaccinated will be tested twice each week.

Proof of full vaccination is required before arriving at school unless a medical exemption has been approved by the school's medical director. Upload the student's proof of vaccination to the Magnus Health portal with other forms.

### **Definition of "Fully Vaccinated"**

According to the CDC, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
  - 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine
- If you don't meet these requirements, you are NOT fully vaccinated.

### **Booster Shots**

The health center will track student eligibility for vaccine booster shots and will communicate with parents/guardians about opportunities to get the booster at or near Northwood School.

## **II. Recent Negative Test Required of All Students, Regardless of Vaccination Status**

Northwood will require all students and employees, regardless of vaccination status, to return to school or work with a recent negative test. We are requiring a test from everyone because we are building a residential community of students from throughout the United States and around the world during a time when transmission rates nationally and in Essex County have returned to levels not seen since the winter.

Requiring the vaccine is our most important layer of protection, and requiring a negative test improves our chances of starting the year virus-free. The recent negative test must be a PCR test or molecular test collected no more than 3 days before arriving at school or a rapid/antigen test from the same day the student arrives at Northwood. If the student tested positive for COVID in the previous 90 days and has fully recovered, proof of the positive test will suffice, and a negative test is not required.

### **III. International Students**

#### **Quarantine Required of Students Not Fully Vaccinated Who Arrive from Outside the United States**

Students arriving from outside the United States who are not fully vaccinated (see definition of “fully vaccinated” above) must quarantine for 7 days before arriving on campus, in compliance with [CDC](#) and [New York State Department of Health](#) guidelines. Students who need assistance with the pre-arrival quarantine should contact Mr. David McCauley, International Student Coordinator.

#### **Testing Before Travel**

International students may need a recent negative test before traveling to the United States. In some cases, the test used to travel may also be used to arrive at Northwood, but if the test was collected more than three days before arriving at Northwood, the student will need a new test.

#### **Vaccinations After Arrival**

Some international students could not access the vaccine at home. The Northwood Health Center will arrange vaccinations for these students shortly after they arrive on campus and parent/guardian consent forms have been collected.

### **IV. Employees and Vaccination**

All Northwood School employees and Sodexo employees assigned to Northwood must provide proof of vaccination to Northwood’s health center at [nurse@northwoodschool.org](mailto:nurse@northwoodschool.org). Staff who are not fully vaccinated or do not provide proof of vaccination must be tested twice weekly for the entirety of the school year or until fully vaccinated. Unvaccinated employees will be billed the cost of testing, approximately \$5 per test.

## **V. Testing**

### **Surveillance Testing**

We will use Abbott Binax Now antigen tests for surveillance testing. We will test all unvaccinated students and staff (including those not yet fully vaccinated) twice weekly in morning clinics on regularly scheduled days (e.g., Monday and Thursday). Health Center staff will schedule those clinics/appointments. Unvaccinated students will be billed the cost of testing, approximately \$5 per test.

We also plan to conduct surveillance testing of a fraction of our vaccinated students and employees every week to monitor for breakthrough infections.

Because of our high vaccination rates, we don't plan to do routine all-school surveillance testing.

### **Diagnostic Testing (Symptomatic Students)**

Symptomatic students and employees, regardless of their vaccination status, must be tested by their healthcare provider or in Northwood's health center. If using your healthcare provider, request a PCR test or a Molecular test. A rapid/antigen test will not clear a student/employee with symptoms to return to school/work. Northwood will use the Abbot ID Now rapid molecular test for symptomatic students. See also "Sick or Symptomatic Students and Employees" below. Symptomatic students/employees will be billed for the cost of the test, approximately \$40.

### **Other Testing**

Vaccinated students and staff who wish to be tested but do not have a known exposure to COVID may be tested in the health center at their expense provided that the Health Center staff is available for such testing. The cost of the test will be billed to the student's or staff's account.

## **VI. Positive Cases, Contact Tracing, and Testing Contacts**

We will again collaborate with Essex County Department of Public Health when a student or employee tests positive, and we expect contact tracing to follow the CDC's [Considerations for Case Investigation and Contact Tracing in K-12 Schools and Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#). What follows is a summary of that guidance as of this writing:

Students and employees who are positive for COVID-19, regardless of their vaccination status, must isolate for at least ten days under the supervision of the Essex County Department of Health.

Unvaccinated close contacts of the positive person must quarantine for at least ten days under the supervision of the Department of Health, and vaccinated close contacts who have developed symptoms must also quarantine. Close contacts in quarantine may be tested during quarantine, but a negative test will not release them from quarantine.

To mitigate against breakthrough cases, vaccinated close contacts of a positive case will be required to wear a mask for up to 14 days and will be tested 3-5 days after the contact with the positive case.

Upon the advice of the Health Department and/or the school's medical director, the school may test groups of the school (e.g., dorm floor, athletic team, etc.) or the entire school community in the event of an outbreak of cases among vaccinated people (breakthrough cases).

## **VII. Quarantine and Isolation**

Because of our high vaccination rates, the school will not have a dedicated facility for quarantine or isolation. Any students ordered to isolate (positive case) or quarantine (usually unvaccinated close contacts of a positive case) will be immediately sent home or to their emergency contact; they will wait in the infirmary until their emergency contact arrives. While getting vaccinated remains the most important step you can take to protect yourself and others, some vaccinated people may test positive and be required to isolate and others may be required to quarantine, which is why all students are required to have an emergency contact who resides a reasonable driving distance to Lake Placid.

## **VIII. Emergency Contacts for Students Far from Home**

Northwood requires that families of all students who reside more than a reasonable drive to Lake Placid must designate or retain an emergency contact or guardian.

Emergency guardians help ensure student health and safety and facilitate student transportation while school is not in session or in the event of travel needs that fall

outside of the school's purview. Some of the reasons the student may need to be picked up are, but not limited to, student isolation requirements due to a communicable disease such as influenza or COVID-19, mandated quarantine, school shut down/vacations, medical or mental health issues requiring close supervision or hospitalization, or a disciplinary issue.

Families can designate a trusted family member or friend who lives within a reasonable drive to Lake Placid or retain a guardian through a guardian/emergency contact service such as [Student Health Advocates](#).

## **IX. Masking Requirements**

Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, the CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students, staff, teachers, and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status. For the start of school, as Northwood forms a residential community comprised of students from dozens of countries and states, we will comply with this guidance and require masks when indoors.

If we begin the school year with a low prevalence of the virus on campus and in the community, and if the vaccination rate in the school community is as high as we expect, the school may decide to lift the indoor mask requirement.

### **Indoor Masking**

To ensure the safety of our campus and surrounding community, Northwood School will comply with the CDC recommendation that all faculty, staff, students and visitors – regardless of vaccination status – must remain masked while indoors, unless in a private space (e.g., office or dorm room), when seated for a meal or while bathing. The indoor turf fieldhouse is considered indoors.

### **Athletics and Athletic Travel**

Northwood's athletic teams will travel to games beginning shortly after the start of the school year. Student-athletes and their coaches/staff must wear a mask between the bus and the locker/changing room and in other public indoor spaces, such as restaurants, hotel lobbies and hallways, rest areas, etc. Masks are not required while student-athletes are training or competing and are optional in the locker room and on buses to and from away games.

### **Transportation**

CDC guidance requires that masks be worn on all public transit, including school buses. For now, and into the foreseeable future, masks are required on Northwood buses in transit to the Hub, dance studio, on field trips, on "jitney runs," to athletic practices, home games, etc.

### **Masks While Off Campus**

Students are required to follow CDC masking guidelines when in public, which currently states that unvaccinated people should wear a mask when indoors and when outdoors and unable to socially distance; fully vaccinated people are advised to wear a mask in public indoor settings when in an area of substantial or high transmission; Lake Placid is currently at a High level of community transmission, according to the [CDC Covid Data Tracker](#).

### **Outdoor Masking**

Students are not required to wear a mask or face covering while outdoors; however, CDC recommends that unvaccinated people wear a mask outdoors when physical distancing is not possible.

## **X. Other Mitigation Plans**

### **Daily Health Screenings**

Students and staff will not be required to complete daily health check forms or have their temperatures checked each morning.

Day students and employees with symptom of COVID-19 are instructed to not come to school or work if they have symptoms. Boarding students with symptoms of COVID-19 must report to the Health Center or contact the AOC if the Health Center is closed. See "Sick or Symptomatic Students and Employees" below.

Posters describing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and the above instructions will be posted visibly around school.

### **Sick or Symptomatic Students and Employees**

**Stay away from school.** Regardless of vaccination status, students and employees who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or

COVID-19, are required to stay home (day students and employees) or in their dorm room or school infirmary (boarding students).

**Get tested.** Symptomatic students and employees, regardless of their vaccination status, must be tested by their healthcare provider or in Northwood's health center. Request a PCR test or a Molecular test. A rapid/antigen test will not clear a student/employee with symptoms to return to school/work.

**Return to school/work if negative and symptom-free.** A negative PCR test or negative Molecular test will confirm the absence of COVID-19 and permit the student/employee to return to school/work when symptoms have subsided. We want you to stay away until the symptoms are gone because we don't want to spread whatever is making you sick to others. A negative rapid/antigen test is not sufficient to return to school without a confirming negative PCR test or Molecular test.

**If you test positive for COVID-19.** Students and employees who test positive will be required to isolate at home or with their emergency contact under the supervision of the Essex County Department of Public Health. Staying home and away from others when sick with COVID-19 is essential to keep COVID-19 infections out of the Northwood community and prevent spread to others.

## **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

High-touch surfaces such as classroom desks and lab tables, doorknobs, banisters, handrails, and fitness center equipment, will be disinfected daily by facilities staff. Public restrooms and dining room surfaces will be disinfected more frequently by staff affiliated with those areas. Employees with offices will be responsible for disinfecting surfaces in those spaces. In the event of positive cases on campus, teaching and dorm staff may be assigned additional disinfecting tasks. Students will continue to keep their clothing, belongings, personal spaces, and shared common spaces sanitized and clean.

## **Physical Distancing**

CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk. CDC provides allowances for students to be closer than 3-feet when schools have other layers of protections, such as vaccine requirements, testing, ventilation, and masking.

## **Dining Room and Foodservice**

Students and employees may sit anywhere they choose in the dining room while meals are being served. Masks are required at all times when not seated and eating: they are required when entering and leaving the dining room, in the server, while being served, and while getting seconds, refilling a drink, etc.

Meals will be served buffet style, with the foodservice staff generally serving main courses and diners helping themselves to other items. The school may change how meals are served to prevent the spread of infectious illness on campus.

## **Ventilation**

HVAC systems that were updated or implemented last school year will be continued this year. Students will be advised to keep dorm windows at least cracked open to promote fresh air exchange on residence halls. Faculty will be advised to open at least one classroom window.

## **Fitness Center and Open Times on Indoor Turf Field**

The school is considering health and safety protocols for these facilities and will update the community when they have been established.

## **Co-Curricular and Other Student Activities**

Co-curricular and other student activities, including weekend activities, will proceed as usual and generally without limitation, except those listed elsewhere in this plan (e.g., masking requirements) and those imposed by outside venues or authorities (e.g., an amusement park may restrict entry to vaccinated guests).

## **Weekend Leaves**

Students are permitted off-campus weekend leaves unless the weekend is designated "closed." Students and parents/guardians are required to complete the weekend pass form on Orah (formerly called Boardingware) no later than noon on Thursday before the weekend. During the weekend leave, students must agree to refrain from conduct that could bring COVID-19 back to campus and to take steps (including regular hand washing, social distancing and wearing a mask while indoors) to prevent infection. The

school may require students who left campus for weekend leave to be tested the following week.

## Town Visits

Students are permitted to leave campus to go into town, provided that they first “sign out” using the Orah app (formerly Boardingware) on their phone. See “Masks Off Campus” above. As of this writing, Essex County is experiencing High Transmission of COVID-19, so masks are required when indoors, regardless of vaccination status and even if a business posts that masks are not required.

## XI. Guidance for Schools from Public Health Authorities

- [Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [The Policy Lab at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [New York State Education Department](#)