

BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 22, 2021

Dear Families and Staff,

I hope this communication finds you safe and well. Below please find some important updates.

Staying Home When Sick

Staying home when feeling sick with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 is essential to keep COVID-19 infections out of our schools and prevent the spread to others. **Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of a potentially infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home** and be referred to their healthcare provider for diagnostic testing and care. If a child becomes sick at school with COVID-19 type symptoms, the child will be immediately sent home with instructions about next steps from the nurse.

Testing and Reporting of COVID-19 Cases

Testing and reporting of COVID-19 cases identified in PreK-12 students and staff, and subsequent contact tracing, isolation of infected individuals, and quarantine of close contacts, continues to be a necessary part of PreK-12 school operations.

Please be advised that some aspects of these processes have been updated by DPH and are detailed below.

Individual does not have COVID-19 symptoms, BUT had close contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-19

- Individuals who are **not fully vaccinated**, are without symptoms, and are identified as a close contact to a positive case must stay at home and self-quarantine for **10 days since last exposure** and may return to school on day 11, if symptom free. However, daily symptom monitoring is necessary for an additional 4 days (days 11–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health authority, healthcare provider, and the school nurse.
- Any student directed to self-quarantine is excluded from participation in **team athletics or other group extracurricular activities** for a full 14 days. However, the student can only return to athletics or other school sponsored extra-curricular activities on day 11, if the student is symptom free and has a negative PCR or antigen SARS-CoV-2 test result on day 8 or later. The test must be administered by a state licensed clinical laboratory, pharmacy-based testing provider, or other healthcare provider facility and the test results must be

reported to the school nurse. Without a negative COVID-19 test result provided to the school nurse, the student cannot participate in athletics or other school sponsored extra-curricular activities until day 15. If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health authority, healthcare provider, and the school nurse.

- It is still recommended that a **fully vaccinated** person should have a test 3-5 days after the last exposure to COVID-19. If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local health department, healthcare provider, and the school nurse.

Emergency Broadband Benefits Program (EBB)

The [Emergency Broadband Benefits \(EBB\) program](#) (EBB) program provides a series of monthly discounts for broadband service and associated equipment to qualifying households. Currently, 1 in 12 eligible households have enrolled in the program nationally, meaning a large share of the \$3.2 billion in funding remains.

Benefits Overview

- \$50 / month discount on broadband service and associated equipment rentals;
- Up to a \$75/month discount for qualifying Tribal land households; and
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer.

Eligibility Criteria

Households qualify for the Emergency Broadband Benefit with incomes at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines OR any member of the household:

- Qualifies for Lifeline benefits through participation in SNAP, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, Federal Public Housing Assistance, or Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit;
- Participates in one of several Tribal specific programs: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal Head Start (only households meeting the relevant income qualifying standard), Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020 due to job loss or furlough AND has a total household income in 2020 at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers;
- Received a federal Pell Grant in the current award year;
- Received approval for benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision, in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program, and that provider received FCC approval for its eligibility verification process.

Please see the attached documents for further information ~ [EBB Benefit Flyer.pdf](#), [EBB Flyer - Spanish.pdf](#), and [EBB Program Brochure Print.pdf](#).

Child Tax Credit

The IRS has asked that superintendents share with families that they estimate that almost 24,000 Connecticut children who may be eligible to be claimed for the expanded Advance Child Tax Credit have not been claimed on a recent tax return. This means that these Connecticut families could be losing out on approximately \$71,000,000 in Child Tax Credits. Please see the attached information on IRS Advance Child Tax Credit payments ~ [IRS Publication 5534.pdf](#) and [IRS Publication 5534 in Spanish.pdf](#).

For families that want to learn more about Advance Child Tax Credit payments the IRS is holding a number of free information sessions in English and Spanish. Please see the attached invitations ~ [Advance Child Tax Credit Information Sessions - Connecticut.pdf](#) and [Advanced Childcare Credits Information Sessions - Spanish.pdf](#) . All are welcome.

Please know that we are here to work with you and we remain committed to providing the safest and highest quality educational experience we can envision.

Stay safe and be well,

Kristin B. Heckt

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Superintendent of Schools