

## November 2021

Good Evening SJS Families,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. I wrote this newsletter while watching the Pats game and yelling at the tv, so please excuse any typos. Lots of information in this email so bear with me! SJS had a busy week as you could gather from the Covid-19 notification emails. If we can, please continue to respect the privacy of those isolating and quarantining and keep them in our thoughts and prayers. I can't thank the staff enough! The staff were amazing assisting me and the students with rapid testing and contact tracing. I really couldn't ask for a better team to work with.

A few reminders, when calling your student in for an absence, please be specific. Unfortunately, it makes the process more time consuming if you email "they're not feeling well or under the weather" etc. This will assist us to guide next steps in this process. I cannot stress enough to please keep your student home if they are feeling sick or not themselves. This year seems different than last, and it is due to the delta variant. It is presenting more as cold symptoms in the younger kids. We are all in this together.

If you have not signed your student up for our Test and stay Program/Symptomatic Testing Program, please think about doing so. It makes the student visit in the office much more streamlined and efficient if they are already in the consent portal. Otherwise, it takes time trying to reach parents and obtain consent in the moment of identifying close contacts or ill students. The link is below. Students in Kindergarten and older are doing amazing self-swabbing! They are total Rockstar's.

Some exciting news to share is that the Pfizer vaccine is available for children ages 5 to 11. It is not a mandated vaccine in Massachusetts or at SJS at this time, but it is encouraged. Please see this attached memo in many languages from Margaret R. Cooke Acting Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Jeffrey Riley Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Here is the link again for Canton's Board of Health Vaccine Clinic. Maybe I will see some of you there Wednesday! I am happy to vaccinate your child! Wait in my line, I am sure they will be excited to see me the next day! [https://home.color.com/vaccine/register/canton.](https://home.color.com/vaccine/register/canton)

If you have your child vaccinated, please email me and update with dates of administration. This will be critical information to have when contact tracing and determining close contact status.

Influenza vaccines are not mandated this year but encouraged. If your child does get vaccinated, please send in documentation.

There are also no requirements for testing when traveling this year. Testing cannot be required for a student's return to school after holidays or vacations. Individuals are encouraged to follow recommended travel guidelines from the CDC.

The mask requirement was updated through at least January 15, 2022. DESE will continue to work with medical experts and state health officials to evaluate the mask requirement beyond January 15.

Here is a nice video from our Sesame Street friends regarding the vaccine. Feel free to share with your child-[Sesame Street Video](#).

And one more! Here is an article from UC Davis where experts answer parents' questions about the Covid-19 Vaccine for kids age 5-11- [Click here](#).

If you are experiencing vaccine hesitancy, I suggest you reach out to your child's Pediatrician or Primary Care provider and engage in a conversation.

Thank you.  
Tara Medeiros  
SJS Nurse

### **November Highlight**

November is National Diabetes Month. I wanted to highlight some Diabetes facts from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF)

- Some 1.6 million Americans are living with T1D, including about 200,000 youth (less than 20 years old) and more than 1 million adults (20 years old and older).1,5
- 64,000 people are diagnosed each year in the U.S.
- 5 million people in the U.S. are expected to have T1D by 2050, including nearly 600,000 youth.
- Between 2001 and 2009, there was a 21 percent increase in the prevalence of T1D in people under age 20.
- In the U.S., there are \$16 billion in T1D-associated healthcare expenditures and lost income annually.
- Less than one-third of people with T1D in the U.S. are consistently achieving target blood-glucose control levels.

[More Diabetes Facts Here!](#)

### **Consent Portal**

<https://www.cic-health.com/consent/ma?district=null>

### **If your child is absent**

When calling or emailing your student as absent, SJS asks that you include Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Medeiros and the student's teacher in an email and the reason for the absence. [Tara.Medeiros@sjscanton.org](mailto:Tara.Medeiros@sjscanton.org)  
[suzanne.sullivan@sjscanton.org](mailto:suzanne.sullivan@sjscanton.org)

### **Information about our two testing programs at SJS**

#### **1.Symptomatic Testing**

- Used for students who start to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at school. **(If symptomatic BEFORE school, the student should stay home and the nurse should be called.)**
- Symptoms of the virus can look identical to other illnesses like allergies, cold or flu, and this test determines if a symptomatic student has COVID-19.
- This is a rapid test (Abbott BinaxNow), and we receive the results of this test within 15 minutes.
- If a student has minimal symptoms (excluding fever or vomiting) and tests are negative, they may remain in school instead of being sent home.

#### **2. Test and Stay**

- Used for students and staff who may have been exposed to a positive person **inside or outside** of school. **(We are following Canton Public Schools Policy, this is an updated change as of 10/1/21)**
- ***If they are not showing symptoms, instead of having to quarantine and miss school, these students and staff will be tested daily with a rapid test while they remain in school as long as they are NOT symptomatic.***
- Students and staff participate in Test and Stay for 7 days after they have been exposed to a positive individual.

**\*Please note:** Test and Stay is not available for unvaccinated close contacts exposed to a positive individual living in the same household. The close contact unvaccinated individual will be required to follow the traditional protocol of quarantining for 7 days, testing by a PCR or Antigen test on day 5. If the individual remains asymptomatic and tests negative, they may come out of quarantine on day 8 and return to school. ***This protocol is supported by local safety officials because the rate of transmission in a household is extremely high. Close contacts must be able to isolate themselves from the + individual in the household. If this cannot occur there maybe different isolation/quarantine protocols.***

**\*Please also note** At home rapid tests are not accepted. Testing must be done with a trained medical provider. Canton Board of Health hosts weekly testing clinics as well as

flu and covid vaccinations clinics. Please see the site here- [Canton Board of Health testing and Vaccination Clinics](#)

### **Vaccines, 5 to 12 and 12 and older**

If your student, 12 and older, has been vaccinated. If you can please send in documentation. This is important to know as they will not have to test or quarantine if there is a positive case. I will update their health record.

### **Masks**

Consistent with the authority provided by the Board, and after consulting with medical experts and state health officials, the Commissioner is extending the mask requirement through at least January 15, 2022. The Department will continue to work with medical experts and state health officials to evaluate the mask requirement beyond January 15.

Masks should cover an individual's nose and mouth. Masks with valves or vents are not recommended by the CDC. For more information about appropriate mask use, please see: [Masks](#)

### **Reminders**

As a reminder, if your child presents with any new symptoms of cold or illness, it is important to keep them home. Here is the symptom list:

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

### **Where can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

DESE and DPH strongly recommend any eligible students or staff receive the vaccine.

- For **CVS Pharmacy** locations offering the vaccine please click [HERE](#).
- For **Walgreens Pharmacy** locations offering the vaccine please click [HERE](#).
- For other Massachusetts COVID-19 vaccination sites please click [HERE](#)
- For **Canton Board of Health**-Click [Here](#)

### **Health screenings**

Health screenings for students will begin in the month of October and will continue throughout the year. Health screenings include hearing, height, weight, and postural. Vision screening is now on hold as protocols are being updated. If you do not wish for your child to be screened, please email the School Nurse, [Tara.Medeiros@sjscanton.org](mailto:Tara.Medeiros@sjscanton.org)

### **Physicals Due**

Physical exams dated after August 1, 2020 are due for grades preschool, Pre-K, Kindergarten, Grades 4 and 7. I will reach individually if not submitted