

Wellesley Public Schools

3/2/2022

Department of Nursing Services

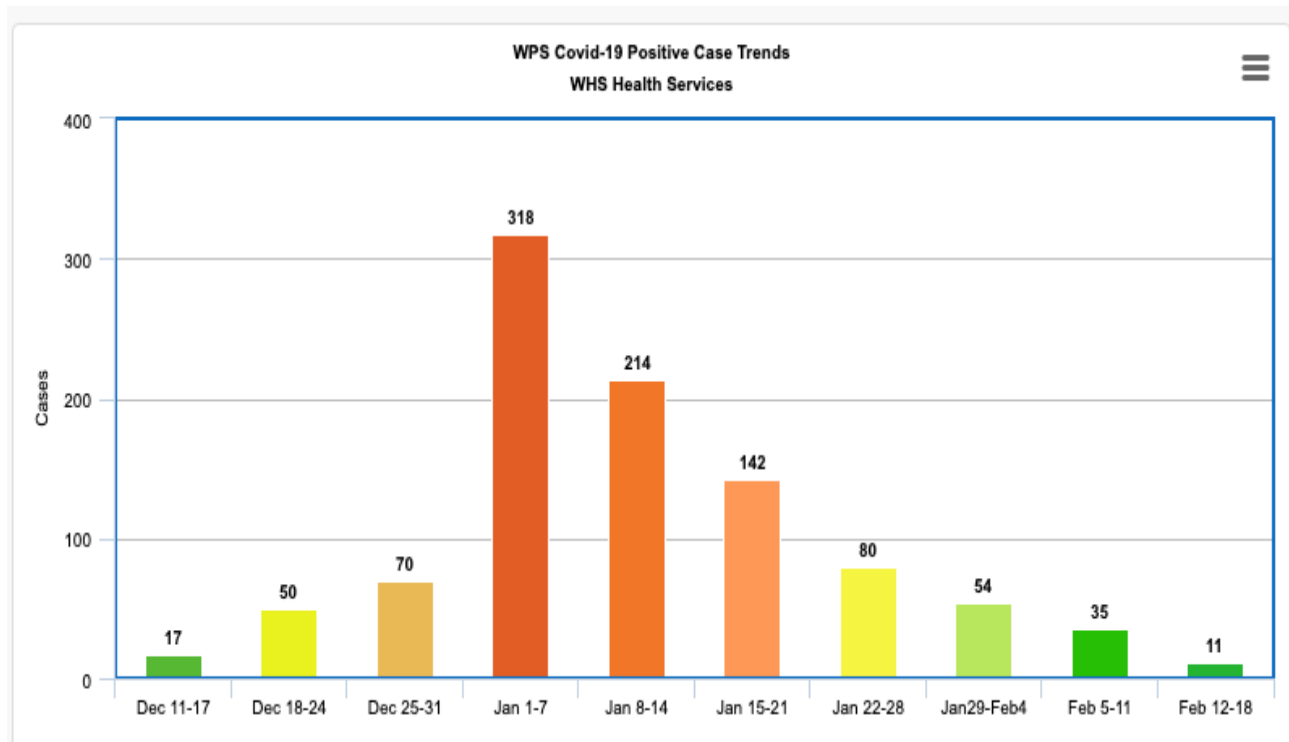
COVID-19 Transition Planning

Proposed Date: March 7, 2022



Background: Since the peak of the Omicron surge at the beginning of 2022, our school community has seen a consistent, dramatic reduction in new cases of COVID-19 across WPS. (Even amid the surge, our Health Department was not seeing high levels of hospitalizations and serious medical symptoms as documented with earlier strains of the virus.) At the same time, there has been a shared recognition of the importance of vaccinations for students, staff, and families. Currently, all WPS schools exceed an 80 percent threshold for vaccination among all students and staff. Following the state-wide indoor mask mandate for schools, which expired on February 28th, WPS believes that all of the conditions are in place for the District to begin relaxing many of the COVID-related mitigation practices that have been in place during the pandemic.

Covid Positive Case Trends



Vaccination Rates as of 2.15.22

School	Students %	Staff %	Total %
<u>Bates</u>	84	100	86
<u>Fiske</u>	80	89	81
<u>Hardy</u>	84	91	84
<u>Hunnewell</u>	87	98	87
<u>Schofield</u>	88	96	88
<u>Sprague</u>	83	97	84
<u>Upham</u>	86	97	86
<u>WMS</u>	88	88	88
<u>WHS</u>	91	88	90
<u>PAWS</u>	n/a	94	n/a

These changes include:

1) **Masks:**

Transition from a “mask-mandatory” to a “mask-optional” environment for all students and staff, effective March 7, 2022 with the following exceptions:

- Health Offices
- Those returning between days 6 and 10 of a Covid-positive diagnosis as stated in current guidelines.
- While WPS no longer conducts contact tracing, a state-wide advisory remains in place recommending mask wearing (10 days from date of exposure) for those who have had a known, prolonged exposure to someone with COVID-19.
- PreK will follow the current EEC guidance, which allows parents to make the determination of whether or not their students wear masks.

2) Lunches:

- Beginning the week of March 7th, schools will begin to transition to normal, indoor lunches at tables in the cafeteria. The timing will be school-based, allowing for the implementation of new routines.
 - a. Individual concerns of those with medically complex situations will be discussed with the school nurse and principal as needed.
- Outdoor lunches will continue to be encouraged whenever possible

3) Visitors/Volunteers:

- Resume typical policies and procedures

4) Performing Arts/Athletics:

- Both have already returned to unlimited participants without incident
- Mask optional environment for participants and athletes
- [DPH Mask Advisory](#) for visitors/guest

5) Field Trips:

Field trips may be approved with the following considerations:

- Venues that require proof of vaccination:
 - a. Field Trip coordinator will need to research venue guidelines and inform students/families of the process involved with regard to providing the documentation on the field trip form. Nursing is unable to provide private health information to third parties.
 - b. Implications for those who are unvaccinated

6) Continued Mitigation Measures:

- Encouragement of vaccination and boosters for those who are eligible.
- Weekly at home testing through the state viral testing program.
- In-school symptomatic testing as well as at-home symptomatic testing through the WPS private supply.
- Maintain upgraded air filtration system (MERV 13 filters).
- Water fountains will remain closed (water bottle filling stations will remain open) through the end of the school year.
- Schools will continue to have masks available for students and staff who request them.
- Open windows in classrooms, weather permitting.
- Outdoor lunches will continue to be encouraged whenever possible.
- WPS, in collaboration with the Wellesley Health Department, will continue to carefully monitor the District's COVID indicators and make any adjustments to mitigation practices as necessary.