



Florham Park Public Schools

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October 23, 2020

RE: Update to Close Contact Definition (October 23, 2020)

Dear Florham Park Parents/Guardians and Staff,

On Friday, October 23, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) updated their criteria for what is now considered a *Close Contact* in regards to someone's exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual. [NJDOH Letter](#).

As you were made aware of in past communications, the previous definition by the NJDOH that school districts followed to determine a *Close Contact* was - Any individual within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for 10 *consecutive* minutes. This definition has now been changed by the NJDOH to read - "a total of 15 minutes or more of close contact (within 6 feet) exposure to an infected person during a 24-hour period." The major difference was terminology that changed the definition from within 6 feet for 10 *consecutive* minutes, to within 6 feet for 15 *cumulative* minutes during a 24-hour period.

Though these new parameters were implemented today, out of an abundance of caution and in consultation with our health officer, it was decided that these new parameters will be used for the Brooklake School COVID-19 situation that I communicated to you that occurred yesterday. Parents of students and/or staff that have been determined as *Close Contact*, under the new parameters, will be contacted immediately to quarantine for 14-days since last exposure, as per NJDOH guidelines. Please note that if you or your child is quarantined under NJDOH guidance, this includes being quarantined from in-person instruction at school, as well as outside events/activities.

Moving forward, and in consultation with our health department, the district will proceed with these new parameters provided by the NJDOH to determine *Close Contact* tracing. Accordingly, the district will be communicating with staff about adjustments to our teaching practices. Please keep these new parameters in mind for how you and your family interact outside of the school setting as well since we continue to be committed to providing our students with an in-person option, which is the best possible situation for students. For example, a neighbor who you normally speak with two-times a day for approximately 7-8 consecutive minutes at a time **with whom you choose to be six feet or closer**, would now be considered a *Close Contact* under the NJDOH, where with the previous guidelines, this situation would not have led to being considered a *Close Contact*. The district remains prepared for all situations that may arise due to our in-person and virtual academic platform options.

I know that these events could be frustrating at times, but together, we will get through this.

Sincerely,

Steven Caponegro

Dr. Steven Caponegro

"How could the world go back to the way it was [...]? But in the end, it's only a passing thing...this shadow. Even darkness must pass."
— J.R.R. Tolkien, Lord of the Rings

cc: Mr. Thomas Cantisano, Florham Park Health Officer