

Superintendent Gives School District on COVID-19 Updates

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Schools Superintendent Alan Addley acknowledged in his Friday COVID-19 update that the increase in COVID-19 cases among individuals in the school district and the disruptions caused by contact tracing and quarantines have been difficult this past week.

It's all a "reminder that we are not out of the woods," he said. "It is also a reminder that we should not become complacent about our everyday behaviors and commitment to keeping each other safe by exercising travel, and health practices" that authorities recommend, he said.

He noted that some students have been quarantined "several times over the last few weeks, and sometimes consecutively." But he added that the state requires the school district to quarantine.

"It is our observation that most cases continue to originate from home, community and sports-related gatherings and activities," he said.

So far, students can only get the Pfizer vaccine, and the school district isn't yet permitted to hold a vaccine

clinic for students, even if the Pfizer vaccine were available, Addley said. If the district can do so in the future, it will try to set up vaccinations for students aged 16 and above.

In the meantime, he added, teachers and other staff are scheduled to get their second vaccine doses on Saturday, April 3.

Superintendent's Message

Here's the full text of Addley's message, sent to Darienite.com at 3:47 p.m.:

[Friday] March 26, 2021

Dear Families and Staff,

The significant increase in COVID cases, contact tracing, the number of people quarantined, and disruptions to school schedules this week is a reminder that we are not out of the woods.

It is also a reminder that we should not become complacent about our everyday behaviors and commitment to keeping each other safe by exercising travel, and health practices consistent with Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Unfortunately, some students have been quarantined several times over the past few weeks and sometimes consecutively. It is our observation that most cases continue to originate from home, community and sports-related gatherings and activities. The District is required to continue to implement quarantining practices consistent with CDPH and CDC requirements. While the CDC revised its physical distancing recommendation to three feet, it is still the requirement to quarantine students and staff who are within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

To avoid future disruptions to in person student learning, it is imperative as a community that we remain vigilant. As we approach the long weekend and upcoming spring recess, we also ask those that are traveling to follow the travel recommendations as outlined by the CDC and DPH.

Yesterday, Governor Lamont announced that all individuals 16 years of age and older will be eligible to schedule appointments for COVID vaccines beginning on April 1.

Under the FDA's Emergency Use Authorization for the COVID vaccine, only the Pfizer vaccine is approved for 16 and 17 year old children. Additionally, vaccine providers are not currently permitted to schedule clinics specifically for high school students.

We will continue to collaborate with the Darien Health Department should it become permissible and logistically possible to obtain the Pfizer vaccine to organize a mass vaccination effort for our students. In the meantime, we look forward to our staff receiving their second vaccine dose on Saturday, April 3.

Darienite

News for Darien

<https://darienite.com>

Enjoy the weekend,

Sincerely,

Dr. Alan Addley, Ed.D

Superintendent of Schools