



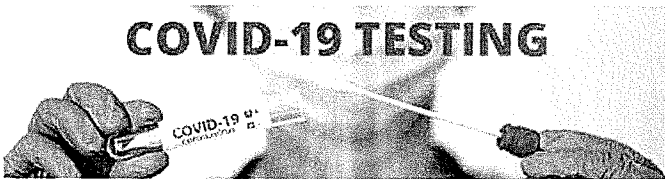
# Mettawee Messenger

January 20, 2022 Principal: Brooke DeBonis 645-9009

## Principal's Corner:

Please refer to the letter following your Mettawee Messenger in regards to new covid testing procedures. The Vermont Agency of Education and the Department of Health have changed the COVID-19 testing protocols in Vermont schools. Vermont has moved to a "Test at Home" model for school children. We have begun transitioning to "Test at Home" and will fully transition when we receive enough test kits to provide to families. We are still encouraging families to register for "Test to Stay" as this allows us, with your permission, to test your children when they arrive at the nurse's office with concerning symptoms. In this scenario your child will likely be sent home with a follow up test for 24 hours after the first test. Thank you so much for your cooperation and patience as we navigate these changes.

### COVID-19 TESTING



## Mettawee Community School / BRSU Family Handbook

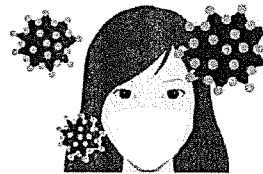
You can also find the handbook by  
following this link:

☰ MCS/BRSU Family Handboo...



## CLOSE CONTACT STATUS & JISP

**If your child has been identified as a close contact they MAY NOT participate in activities outside of school including JISP activities. Testing before school allows our students to stay in school but does not get them out of quarantine outside of school. They are still considered a close contact and therefore at risk of contracting covid-19 and should be quarantining.**



**If you have any questions about this please reach out to Brooke DeBonis or Mandy Mayer.**



Order forms are Due back at school by  
**FRIDAY, JANUARY 28**  
(NO late orders accepted.)

**We are selling High Mowing organic seeds to raise money to purchase a yearbook for each 6th grade student.**

Contact Brooke Hughes-Muse at  
hughesmuse6@gmail.com/802-884-5895 if  
there are any questions.

Checks payable to MCS PTO.  
Seeds should be delivered before Feb break.

~ Thank you so much for your support ~



# Mettawee Messenger

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We dismiss at 11:40 every  
Friday from January through  
March 11th.



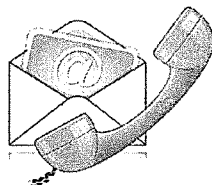
**PTO  
MEETING**

**PTO Meeting on  
Monday, February  
14th at 2:45**

## Contact Information

Please be sure to reach out to the school if your contact information has changed. We need to be sure that current mailing and physical addresses are in our operating system as well as email addresses and phone numbers. In the event of an emergency, a weather related closure, or a COVID related announcement we want to be sure we are communicating effectively.

You can email Heidi Hammell at [hhammell@brsu.org](mailto:hhammell@brsu.org) or Cheryl Chalmers at [cchalmers@brsu.org](mailto:cchalmers@brsu.org) if you need your information updated. Thank you for your cooperation.



## COVID-19 CORNER



There is a lot of information following your Mettawee Messenger this week regarding COVID-19 including information about the new testing guidance, the COVID-19 Return to Exercise Guidance, and the VPA's Update on Return to Play Guidance. Please read it over carefully and if you have any questions don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation. We can get through this together with patience and understanding. Please continue to keep your children home when they are not feeling well and continue to communicate with the school if your child has tested positive for COVID-19.

## TEST TO STAY

Please complete these two links:  
the [consent form](#) as well as [registering in the SimpleReport system](#).

We are encouraging all families to sign your children up for the Test to Stay program.



Mrs. Thomas' 5th Grade Class finally completed this really challenging puzzle. Way to go ST!



# Mettawee Messenger

January 20, 2022 Principal: Brooke DeBonis 645-9009

**SAVE THE DATE**

January 7th - March 11th - Early Release Fridays

February 18th - No School / Parent Conferences

February 21st - February 25th - Winter Break

February 28th - March 4th - Book Fair

March 11th - Last early dismissal

## Basketball News and Updates:



Please find, following your Mettawee Messenger, a sheet from the VPA pertaining to play recommendations for school sports.

Important: If your child is considered a close contact to someone who has tested positive for covid-19, and they are testing to stay, they CAN participate in basketball practice but MAY NOT participate in games against other schools.

## A Quick look at the week

### Jan. 20th - AWAY GAMES

- 3/4 Boys at Poultney at 4:30
- 3/4 Girls at Poultney at 5:30
- 5/6 Girls at Wells at 4:30
- 5/6 Boys at Middletown Springs at 4:30

### Jan. 24th - Practice - 3/4 Girls - 2:30-4:00

- Practice - 5/6 Girls - 4:00-5:30
- Practice - 5/6 Boys - 5:30-7:00

### Jan. 25th - Practice - 3/4 Boys - 2:30-4:00

- Practice - 5/6 Girls - 4:00-5:30

### Jan. 26th - Practice - 3/4 Girls - 2:30-4:00

#### HOME GAMES vs. Castleton/Orwell

- 5/6 Girls at 4:30
- 5/6 Boys at 5:30

### Jan. 27th - Practice - 5/6 Boys 5:30-7:00

#### AWAY GAMES

- 3/4 Girls at Wells at 4:30
- 3/4 Boys at Middletown Springs at 4:30

### Jan. 28th - AWAY GAMES

- 5/6 Boys at 4:30 at Poultney
- 5/6 Girls at 5:30 at Poultney



6th Graders enjoying this bluebird day!

January 20, 2022

Dear Mettawee Families,

As you may have heard, the Vermont Agency of Education and the Department of Health have changed the Covid 19 Testing Protocols in Vermont schools. Vermont has moved to a "Test at Home" model for school children. The Mettawee Community School has begun the transition to this model and it will be fully implemented as soon as we have received enough of the test kits to provide to families. We are writing to you today to let you know the different scenarios and processes that will take place moving forward.

## **Scenario 1: Rapid Testing for Presumptive Contacts**

This scenario applies to both staff and students whether the contact occurs in school or in the community.

### **Process**

- School learns of a positive case in a student or staff member.
- School notifies students/families that there is a case in their class. Classmates are considered "presumptive contacts" if the person was in school during their infectious period.
- Students and staff who are presumptive contacts should pick up ***take home antigen test kits***. Kits could be sent home with students in their backpacks. We will not be monitoring compliance of use of kits.
- Presumptive contacts receive a different number of kits depending on their vaccination status.
  - If individuals are fully vaccinated (and have received a booster for adults), they should receive 2 tests and use them on the fourth and fifth days after learning of their presumptive exposure.
  - If individuals are not fully vaccinated, they should receive 5 tests and use them for the next 5 consecutive days after receiving them.

For individuals with continuous household exposure:

- If individuals are fully vaccinated (and have received a booster for adults), it is recommended that they test every 3 to 5 days while their household contact is in isolation AND for 5 consecutive days after the household contact ends isolation.
- If individuals are not fully vaccinated, it is recommended that they test daily while their household contact is in isolation, and for 5 consecutive days after the household contact ends isolation.

Individuals with presumptive school contact do not need to otherwise quarantine during their testing periods. Individuals who are close contacts to a case outside of school are recommended to quarantine according to Vermont Department of Health [guidance](#), but may attend school according to the above protocol.

## **Scenario 2: Diagnostic Testing**

Mrs. Mayer will have access to rapid antigen testing (with consent - see below) for the following purposes:

- School-based testing for students or staff with symptoms AT SCHOOL.
- School-based testing for families who need school assistance in administering tests under Scenario 1, above.

If antigen tests are used, Mrs. Mayer will conduct one test in school and send a second test home with the family to be completed approximately 24 hours after the first test.

Schools will require consent from families to do in-school testing.

If you haven't already registered, please complete the [consent](#) and [registration](#).

If a student does not attend school due to illness, their parent/guardian may access 2 rapid antigen tests by picking them up at school. These tests should be taken as close to 24 hours apart as possible. Staff may do the same.

Symptomatic students and staff who have two negative tests, have symptom improvement and are fever free for 24 hours may return to school.

### **Kit Distribution and FERPA**

School district personnel with a need to know may access any FERPA Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act protected information without any need to get consent or provide disclosure. If a student vaccination status is used to create resources for the sole purpose of assisting with test kit distribution, those resources become part of the student's educational record, pursuant to FERPA. For more information, please refer to [Joint Guidance on the Application of FERPA and HIPAA to Student Health Records](#).

Masking inside is one of the most important mitigation measures we can use, so we will be asking students to keep their masks on properly - covering their noses as well! Thank you so much for everything you do at home to encourage your students to engage in proper mask use.

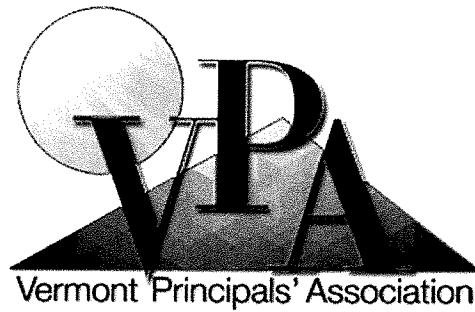
The well-being and safety of our students and staff are our top priority as we continue to navigate this pandemic. We are hopeful that there is an end in sight, but in the meantime we are doing what we do best . . . teaching our students and providing a safe learning environment for all!

Thanks again for all that you do to support your children and our school. Please reach out to us at any time if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Brooke DeBonis, Principal

Mandy Mayer, RN, BSN, School Nurse



## **UPDATE ON RETURN TO PLAY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL SPORTS**

The following guidance was shared with the VPA by Secretary of Natural Resources Julie Moore and approved by Dr. Levine and Dr. Kelso at the Vermont Department of Health. Please distribute this widely to coaches, parents, and others who work with student athletes in schools.

### **Students who test positive for COVID:**

If a student tests positive for COVID they should not practice or play regardless of symptoms or vaccination status until a minimum of **5 days** have passed **AND** they:

- have two negative antigen tests;
- to the extent they were symptomatic, have had no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine) and other symptoms have improved; and
- have been cleared by their primary care physician to begin the Return to Play protocol

### **Students who are vaccinated and a close contact:**

If a student is vaccinated and a close contact of someone who tests positive, they can practice and play in interscholastic competitions/games

- student should be tested on day five post-exposure
- If the student tests positive or develop symptoms at any point they should follow section **Students Who Test Positive for COVID** above

### **Students who are not vaccinated and a close contact:**

If a student is unvaccinated and close contact of someone who tests positive, they can take an antigen test daily and:

- if negative:
  - continue to go to school and practices;
  - following five negative daily antigen tests, return to interscholastic competitions/games
- if positive
  - follow steps for Students **Who Test Positive for COVID**

### **Two Additional Points from the State:**

- masks should be worn by student-athletes (with limited exceptions) at all times, regardless of vaccination status, recent exposure or testing positive for COVID;
- the Return to Play protocol is separate and distinct from return to school or community following close contact or COVID positive tests results. The Return to Play protocol is from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National guidance. Vermont AAP has recommended that schools defer to the local pediatric community for when a student may return to play. At this time, we are awaiting any updates or change in national guidance before changing any Vermont protocol.

Attached is the Return to play after COVID-19 Infection document that is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics:

[https://mcusercontent.com/54ecdc0ddb00df8abd76525a2/files/22259917-8a4a-e358-3259-098f0f48f0da/Return\\_to\\_play\\_after\\_COVID\\_19\\_Infection.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/54ecdc0ddb00df8abd76525a2/files/22259917-8a4a-e358-3259-098f0f48f0da/Return_to_play_after_COVID_19_Infection.pdf)

## ***The COVID-19 Return to Exercise After COVID-19 Infection Guidance***

Kids 5 years and older who have moderate or severe symptoms (fever for four or more days, or a week or more of body aches, chills or extreme tiredness) should see a health care provider 10 days after the start of infection to determine if they need to gradually return to play, physical education and sports.

Kids 12 years and older who play intense or competitive sports should also see a health care provider 10 days after the start of infection before returning to intense or competitive sports.

Young people may be referred to a cardiology clinic for further evaluation if they have any concerning cardiac symptoms after COVID-19. Once a child is cleared, they can slowly return to sports, gym and recess, but they should continue to be monitored for cardiac symptoms.

The return to exercise guidance has been in effect for the last year and is intended to:

- inform and educate the community about inflammatory risks to the heart and potential concerning symptoms in specific higher risk groups of children and teens (those with moderate to severe symptoms and youth 12 years and older who participate in competitive, high intensity sports);
- help encourage access to medical assessment for these higher risk groups of children and youth; and
- encourage monitoring of those participating in competitive, high intensity sports as they resume activity.

While isolation periods have been shortened due to the reduced duration of infectivity of Omicron, allowing a full 10-day recovery period before returning to sports, gym or recess is important for the health of these higher risk youth based on current evidence and best practice guidelines from the AAP.





# FREE BOOKS FOR KIDS

*register here* →



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book-gifting program that mails a high-quality, age appropriate book to enrolled children every month from birth until the child's fifth birthday. Available in the following towns:

Arlington - Bennington - Danby - Dorset - Glastenbury - Jamaica  
Landgrove - Londonderry - Manchester - Newfane - Peru - Pownal  
Readsboro - Rupert - Sandgate - Searsburg - Shaftsbury - South  
Londonderry - Stamford - Stratton - Sunderland - Townshend  
Wardsboro - Weston - Windham - Winhall - Woodford

Register using QR code, online at  
shirekidsvt.org, or contact Nicole Campbell  
at Shire Kids

SHIREKIDSVT.ORG  
603.759.9415  
nicole@shirekidsvt.org

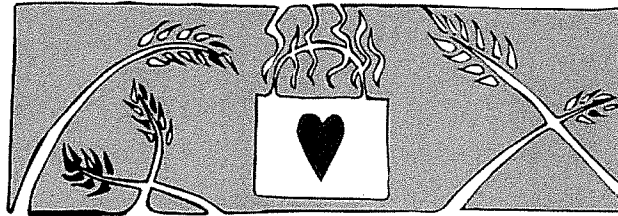


SHIRE KIDS

# FREE MEALS

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For those negatively impacted by COVID-19 or  
experiencing food insecurity



**EVERYONE EATS !**

Restaurant-prepared take out meals with  
local VT ingredients

Schedule

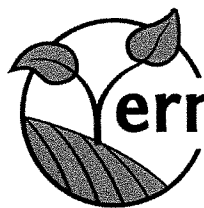
**Wednesdays**

**1:30PM - 4:00PM**

at the Smokey House Center  
426 Danby Mountain Rd, Danby

Smokey House Center is a pre-order site only, you must pre-order meals by emailing [jamie@smokeyhouse.org](mailto:jamie@smokeyhouse.org) or calling 802-772-5919. Meals are provided by Mach's Market in Pawlet. Meal delivery can be arranged.

Provided by



**ermont Farmers  
Food Center**

in partnership  
with



Rutland County hub of the Vermont Everyone Eats  
program

visit [vermontfarmersfoodcenter.org/everyoneeats](http://vermontfarmersfoodcenter.org/everyoneeats)