



“...that they might
be called trees of
righteousness”

Dear Parents, Students and Staff,

September 22, 2020

The New York State Department of Health has issued revised guidance regarding how schools must respond to students and/or staff who display COVID-19 symptoms. The DOH language is as follows:

Responsible Parties must establish protocols and procedures, in consultation with the local health department(s), about the requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school. This return to school protocol shall include, at minimum, documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result, and symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation.

For the safety and welfare of all students and staff, we must comply with these protocols. Therefore, starting Wednesday, September 23, any student who displays COVID-19 symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19 may not return to school until they are able to provide the following:

1. documentation from a health care provider following evaluation AND
2. a negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result AND
3. symptom resolution OR if COVID-19 positive - release from isolation

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

Students or staff are symptomatic if they have a temperature of $\geq 100^{\circ}$ F OR any of the following:

- Fatigue
- Cough
- Congestion or runny nose
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Vomiting or Diarrhea
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle aches

**If school personnel are already aware of a non-COVID-19 chronic pre-existing condition that causes that symptom AND if the nature of the symptom (duration, intensity, etc.) is consistent with what school personnel are familiar with.*

It is imperative that the school has prior knowledge of pre-existing conditions that may cause these symptoms, so we ask that you confirm any pre-existing conditions with our school nurse. We must ask that parents err on the side of caution and encourage you to please contact your healthcare provider for guidance as needed.

This provides everyone a nice opportunity to again discuss the seriousness of our current COVID-19 pandemic and its potential to impact our school and community.

Respectfully,

Jonathan R. Retz
Head of School, Houghton Academy