

COVID-19 Update

Contact Tracing Review

December 16, 2021, School Committee Meeting

WHAT'S DIFFERENT FROM LAST SCHOOL YEAR?

2020-2021

- Hybrid model in 2020-2021
 - Less than 50% students in the building - less absentee follow up calls, fewer close contact calls
- Hold on all additional health screenings - i.e., vision & hearing
- Delayed documentation for physicals and immunizations
- Low tolerance level for symptoms - fewer sick students in clinic

2021-2022

- All students (100%) in school
- Increased follow-up for absenteeism
- All health screenings to be completed
- Pre-COVID-19 expectations for immunizations and physicals
- More complicated process for contact tracing/longer phone calls

POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES

Grade Level	SY2021 Sep - Dec	SY2122 Aug - Dec
Elementary	64	143
Middle	37	41
Other	6	2
Sr High	74	58
Total	181	244

September 2020 – DESE/DPH Protocols

Exposure ≥ 15 minutes
within 6 feet

10-day quarantine

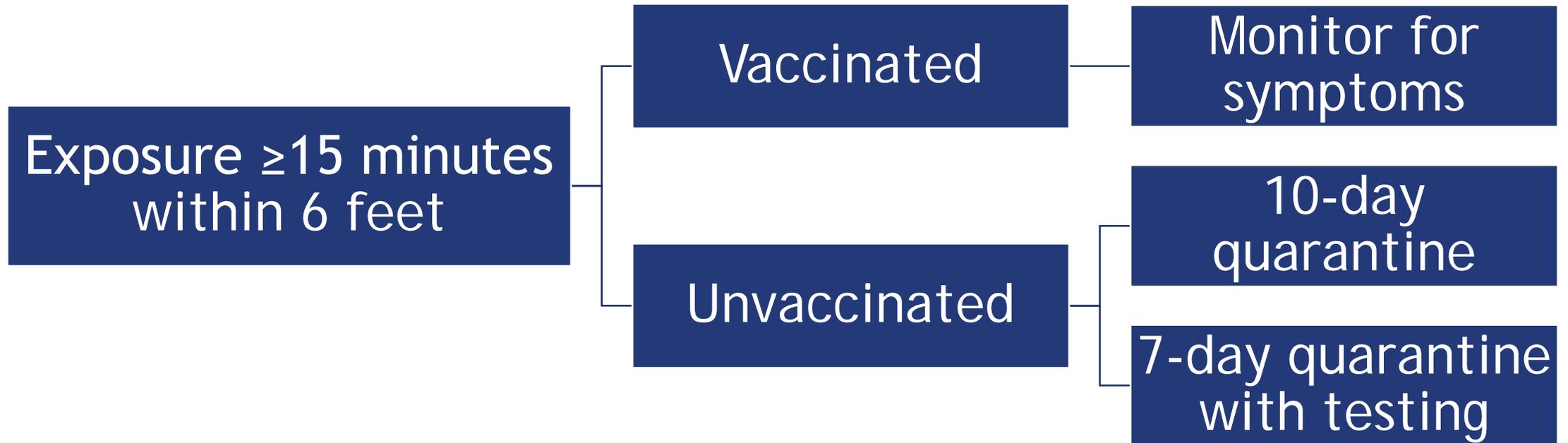
Changes in DESE/DPH protocols over time

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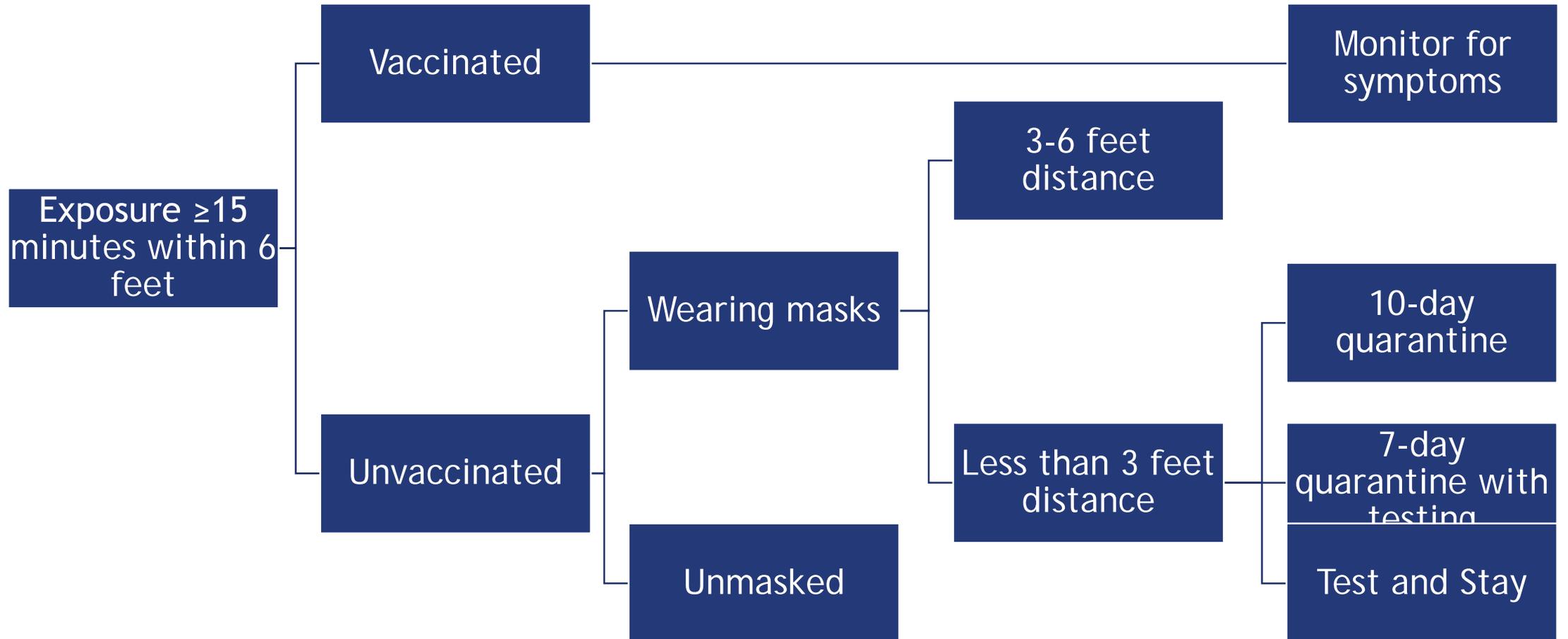
10-day quarantine

7-day quarantine
with testing

Changes in DESE/DPH protocols over time



September 2021 – DESE/DPH Protocols



CHALLENGES TO APS NURSES

Contact Tracing

- Complicated outreach and information gathering process
- Time consuming to contact teachers/Principals to identify close contacts.
- Multiple steps to notify families of close contacts (letters/phone calls)
- Time consuming phone calls to families to explain DESE/DPH guidelines related to isolation/quarantine/testing options.
- Additional calls to other parties coaches/transportation/special programs
- Time consuming Administrative follow-up to document all calls, maintain data for dashboard, communicate with each school nurse as applicable

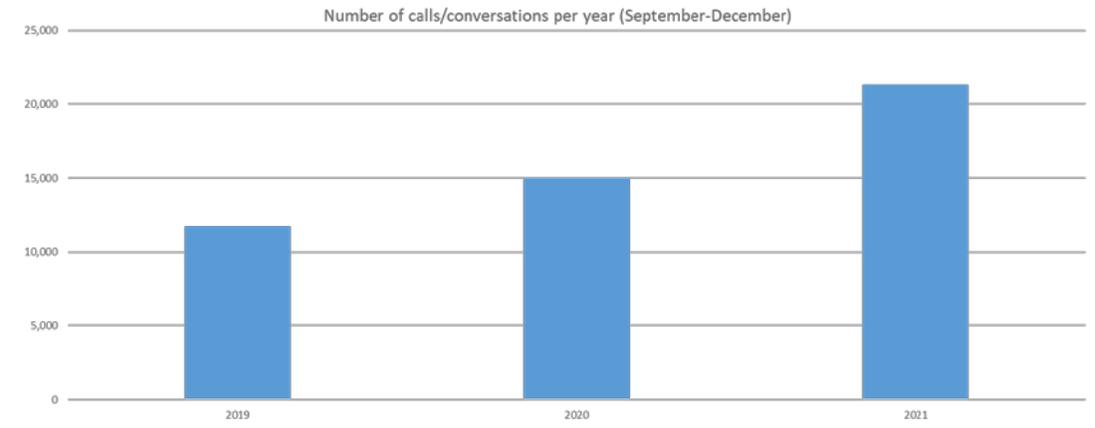
Students coming to school when symptomatic - 6 AHS students dismissed within 30 mins.

Additional test and stay responsibility (1441 test and stay tests in school since Sept, 27, 2021)

Significant increase in calls to families and lengthy calls due to complexity of protocols

INCREASE IN CALLS FROM APS NURSING STAFF TO FAMILIES

- *2019 is baseline year- no COVID*
- *Calls have doubled in volume*



How APS compares to other districts

APS

- Contact tracing on weekends
- Call to close contacts less than 3 feet and unvaccinated
- Call to close contacts 3-6 feet, and vaccinated
- PCR required to confirm all positive COVID-19 cases

Regional Districts

(34 survey results)

- Only 15 towns contact trace on weekends
- 33 towns call close contacts less than 3 feet and unvaccinated
- 5 towns call close contacts 3-6 feet and vaccinated
- 12 districts accept antigen as confirmed COVID-19

DESE and DPH requirements

- What are we required to do for DESE & DPH?
- Contact tracing required for schools, daycares, assisted living, congregate housing.
- Contact individuals who are identified close contacts in school
- no specification for letter vs. call
- PCR is the ‘gold standard’ and highly recommended but not required. Certain antigen tests are acceptable.

Proposed changes to processes

- Letters to all families 3-6 feet or vaccinated **vs. phone call**
- Continue Phone calls to families who need additional advice, ESL, unvaccinated, less than 3 feet.
- PCR has been the gold standard, now offer the option of a **proctored antigen recorded in MAVEN** to confirm diagnosis. (DPH is allowing this)
 - Recognize delay in PCR results and long waits to get appointments
 - Note: Strongly encourage PCR for reporting purposes and record of positive results.

Further Recommendations:

- vaccination - no need to quarantine if you are a close contact and do not have any symptoms
- Use of Mass notify - app on phone to determine close contacts
- <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/learn-more-about-massnotify>
- Everyone **must continue** to be vigilant for symptoms