



TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE
SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 01550-2638

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeffrey Villar, Receiver/Superintendent; Dr. Margo Ferrick, Title IX Compliance Officer;
Karen Checka, Nurse
FROM: Andrew R. Pelletier, Director of Inspection Services
DATE: December 21, 2020
SUBJECT: Maintain the 14-days Quarantine

On or about December 6, 2020 Massachusetts Department of Public Health announced guidance document #89 revising the quarantine schedule for persons exposed to a positive Covid-19 event. Soon thereafter DESE announced that they would recommend adopting the newly amended policy throughout the education structure.

Whereas;

no evidence could be found indicating that the new guidance was based on any discovery of a reduced incubation period, and

Whereas;

the guidance specifically confirms the reason for adjusting the quarantine period as:
“if shortened quarantine periods result in increased compliance with contact tracing and adherence to quarantine recommendations, the small risk that someone may develop COVID-19 after a shortened strict quarantine period is outweighed by the expected benefit of reduced transmission from the increased cooperation.

Clearly indicating that the adjustment was to ensure greater compliance even at the cost of a slightly increased threat of Covid-19 spread, and

Whereas:

The school system has the ability to ensure 100% compliance with an appropriate 14-day quarantine by keeping the student and/ or staff member excluded from the school environment for the full duration, and

Whereas;

The Southbridge School system has thus far successfully managed their program in a manner that has prevented any significant spread of the pandemic within the school system, has readily contained any potential outbreaks and has kept the schools functioning with an “In-person” education model

Therefore;

At its regular meeting on December 10, 2020 the Board reviewed the new guidance and after fully discussing they voted to strongly encourage you, the Administration of the Southbridge School System, to exceed the DDESE guidance by maintaining the appropriate 14-day quarantine period for all persons identified as “close contacts” to a positive case of Covid-19.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, or for any further insight into this decision that I could discuss I can be reached at the town offices or be phone at (508) 764 - 4252

You can also reach the Chair of the Board of Health, Ms. Beth Stephens at (774) 452-0216 or Roland LaRochelle, Vice Chair of the Board of Health (774) 230-5978