

Breakthrough infections spike

'Red zone' covers most of state as COVID-19 cases multiply

By Ken Dixon
The red alert COVID-19 flare up has spread to the vast majority of the state over the last week. Now 73 towns and cities including Bridgeport, Fairfield, Milford, Stratford, Newtown, Trumbull, Westport, West Haven and the entire Naugatuck Valley are reporting dangerous levels of infections even as the state has the second-highest vaccination rate in the country. Last week, the state reported that 39 towns experi-

enced 15 infections or more per day per 100,000 residents in the two weeks ending Aug. 7, including Stamford, New Haven and Hartford. The new red zone covers the two weeks ending Aug. 14. The state also reported that the number of so-called breakthrough infections — cases among people fully vaccinated — reached 5,857 in total as of Wednesday. Those cases are spread evenly among all age groups. The previously reported number of breakthrough

Breakthrough infections

The number of COVID-19 cases among people fully vaccinated since February. These numbers are the result of a new method of counting cases.

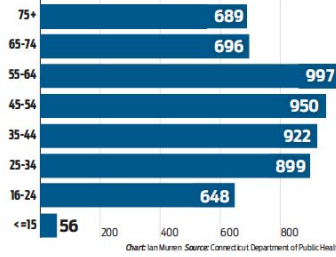


Chart: Ian Murren. Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health

K-12 teachers added to list for mandatory COVID vaccinations

By Julia Bergman
All teachers in kindergarten through grade 12 must be vaccinated by Sept. 27 or agree to weekly testing under an order Gov. Ned Lamont announced Thursday, as the number of people covered by the mandate continued to expand. "Look, I'm not eager to do this. We're doing everything we can to keep Connecticut safe," Lamont said in a briefing Thursday. "We've got over 80 percent of our adults vaccinated.

Let's build on that." The mandatory vaccine requirement applies to teachers in public and private schools under an order Lamont said he would sign. Also covered under the mandate rolled out Thursday are all state employees, as reported by Hearst CTInsider Wednesday. The University of Connecticut on Tuesday ordered vaccinations or mandatory testing for all faculty and staff, after an order that students must be vaccinated

See Teachers on A4



Above, a sign marking tax free week at Shoes 'N' More in Greenwich. Below, the store's assistant manager, Nicole Salamon, talks about how the event has increased business.

A 'boost for business'

Some Greenwich stores are benefiting from sales tax freeze

By Robert Marchant

GREENWICH — Greenwich is always a top destination for shopping, and for shoppers looking to stock up on back-to-school items at a good price, this week is an even better time to browse and buy.

A one-week sales tax holiday running all week is a boon to a number of local retailers. Now in its 21st year, the program is held before the start of the school year annually. Retail purchases of most clothing and footwear items

See Freeze on A4



New assistant principal named at North Street School

By Ken Borsuk

GREENWICH — A new assistant principal is on the job at North Street School, according to an announcement Thursday from the Greenwich Public Schools. The appointment of Jessica McEvily to the position is effective immediately, according to a statement from the district.

"I am truly honored to join the North Street School community, which is known for its dedication and commitment to one another, staff, students and families alike," she said. "I look forward to joining such a strong and dynamic team to serve the needs of North Street for years to come." McEvily, who has been with the district since 2007, most recently served as the assistant principal at Parkway School from January through March.

In her new assignment, she will support the entire North Street community, assisting in the development and achievement of school goals and objectives, while advocating on behalf of all students," the district said in a statement.

McEvily has "shown tremendous dedication to students in our district for many years and has been such a great asset to our community. Her devotion and professional experience makes her a perfect fit for



Greenwich Public Schools / Contributed photo

Jessica McEvily

McEvily, who has been with the district since 2007, most recently served as the assistant principal at Parkway School from January through March.

North Street School," Superintendent of Schools Toni Jones said.

At North Street, McEvily replaced Kathleen Smith-Ramirez, who was appointed the new assistant principal at North Mianus School in July.

At Parkway, McEvily's responsibilities included supervising and assisting special education staff members, facilitating all

See Principal on A7

Two Greenwich friends team up to make a 'real' cookie

By Meredith Guinness

GREENWICH — Everyone loves cookies, but not everyone loves the processed sugar and the unpronounceable ingredients that come with a lot of today's baked goods.

And some people become downright ill while munching the often grain- and dairy-laden treats.

Enter REAL Cookies, a new company started by two Greenwich women that represents a full three years of stirring, baking and re-

turning to the almond flour-dusted drawing board to create a treat that was both tasty and good for you.

"Everything is from the Earth. It's real," said Maria Felton, a former attorney who started the business with her longtime friend

Lauren Berger. "But when people eat it, they have no idea it's a healthy cookie. It tastes ... like a cookie!"

Felton and Berger, who formerly worked at Godiva and Peppercidge Farm and founded her own City Girl

See Cookie on A7



Lauren Berger, left, and Maria Felton with their cookies.



Tyler Sizemore / Hearst Connecticut Media

Get Real Foods co-owners Lauren Berger, left, and Maria Felton.

COOKIE

From page A1

Country Girl cookie company, first lit on the idea of starting their own cookie business during family get-togethers. The pair, who enjoyed cooking nutritious but delicious fare for their loved ones, found that they required 10 different desserts to cover everyone's tastes.

"We're more and more careful about what we're eating," said Berger. "One was gluten-free. One was grain-free. One didn't eat dairy."

Armed with information on dietary restrictions and modern strategies for healthy living, the pair started "baking and baking and baking," enlisting about 25 friends and family members to join in the effort as an informal tasting panel.

"There was no shortage of people who wanted to try them," Berger said.

Three years later, they have created a line of cookies that are consistently getting an unabashed thumbs-up from everyone who has ever tried them, Felton said.

Made with non-GMO ingredients, REAL Cookies are also gluten-free, grain-free, dairy-free, vegan, kosher and paleo-friendly — practically every special category you can think of. The pair took pains to not add empty replacements, such as tapioca starch, to fill the void of gluten in their



Get Real Foods REAL Cookies.

baked goods.

Sweetened with pure Vermont maple syrup instead of refined sugar, the cookies are made with almond and coconut flours, which also add a mild sweetness to the batter. The healthy cookies now come in three flavors: chocolate chip, peanut butter chocolate chip and lemon blueberry.

Felton and Berger consider the cookies to be an appropriate anytime treat that is equally at home on the breakfast table, in a gym pack for a post-practice pick-me-up or on a dessert tray.

Unveiled earlier this month, the cookies are available in single-serve two-packs and boxes of 12 single-serve packs at the REAL Cookies website at realcookiesco.com and Amazon.com. The creators are now in talks to bring

their products to grocery shelves across the area soon.

As the company develops, they hope to support positive community efforts, said Felton, who is executive director at Common Circles, a nonprofit providing interactive experiences to improve intergroup relations and increase empathy and respect.

Berger and Felton are especially pleased with the packaging for the cookies, which features images of water, mountains and "yoga bears" in healthful stretches.

Berger, a yoga instructor, said she hope the packaging offers a gentle reminder to customers to indulge wisely.

"We make hundreds of little decisions each day," she said. "We hope our super-cute yoga bears are a reminder to make the best ones."