



September 13, 2021

## Superintendent's Message: COVID-19 Testing and FAQ Update

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, Students and Community Members,

We are now starting our third week of COVID testing of students and staff. We currently have 95% of students whose parents have provided consent for testing. The remaining 5% of families have the option of submitting a weekly PCR test from their own provider in lieu of the free District service or enrolling into independent study.

The deadline for submitting an exemption form ([English](#) / [Spanish](#)) or registering for COVID testing is Friday, September 17, 2021. Next week your student will be assigned to independent study unless outside PCR tests are provided. Parents who have not registered their students will be contacted. Families who require a saliva test instead of the shallow nasal swab test for an approved medical condition are provided that option on a case by case basis.

### Our goal is to continue in-person instruction:

We are pleased to offer this layer of protection for our students and staff to best ensure the continuity of in-person instruction. Surveillance testing is a huge undertaking. Our team coordinates the logistics of administering the weekly tests, conducts contact tracing after the results are returned, and manages the communication of positive results. We recognize this is an area that requires improvement on our part. The District is currently working to bring on additional health office specialists and agency health experts (LVN's and Nurses) to assist in managing the logistics required.

To that end, we want to provide some information that explains how we will address situations when there is an identified positive case and any individual deemed to be in close contact with the positive case.

### Notification of positive case and close contacts during the school week:

When the District receives notice of a **positive case** during the school week, the parent/guardian of the student is notified by the health staff and provided instructions on when and how to isolate. The parent will also receive information from school administration on how to continue to access their learning through a short term independent study plan. [Linked](#) is a sample letter that will follow and or proceed any direct contact from staff.

For elementary students who are determined to be in **close contact** with a person who has a positive COVID test, a letter will be sent to the parents of all students in the class with instructions to quarantine once it is determined that the student with the positive case was in the class and in close contact with classmates. The student(s) will be instructed to quarantine for 10 days and the school administration and teachers will provide information on how instruction will continue for the 10 days. (See the updated FAQ addressing the 10 day requirement). In the case that the entire class is quarantined, then instructions will be provided through Zoom as we

did during the 2020-21 school year when the schools were under physical closure. [Linked](#) is a sample letter you can expect to receive from your site administration.

**Notification of positive test result and close contacts during the weekend:**

We will be providing staffing support over the weekend to notify families who receive a positive test result over the weekend and who will be required to quarantine due to contact exposure.

With weekend notification, the following actions will take place:

- In the case of elementary schools, when the District receives a **positive case** notice during the weekend, the parent/guardian is notified by authorized testing agency staff and provided instructions on when and how to isolate at home. A district representative will follow up to gather more information during the week and provide instructions on when and how to isolate at home.
- For students requiring quarantine due to contact exposure, a letter will be sent to the parents of all students in the class with instructions to quarantine once it is determined that the student with the positive case was in the class and in close contact with the student(s). This is to ensure that the exposed students do not report to school on the following Monday or first day of class in the following week.
- The school administration and health office will follow up on Monday the next school day with instructions on how to proceed with learning and address any questions parents may have at that time. Please note that any question(s) a parent may have will need to be addressed upon the return of staff and administration on that Monday as school is not open during the weekend and staff is not working.
- In the case of secondary schools, we will notify any student and or staff who tested positive and direct them to isolate for 10 days. There will not be any notification for quarantining students who may have been in close contact with the positive person over the weekend. The contact tracing and notifications of close contact individuals will take place on Monday for results that come in on Saturday or Sunday. Again, please also note that the school nurses, health staff, and administration will respond to inquiries about testing and contact tracing during the week and not over the weekend.

We are capturing most frequently asked questions by parents and staff in a weekly updated Frequently Asked Question (FAQ): [English](#) / [Spanish](#). Please note when new Q and As are added you will see a date to show it's new since the last update. This document contains responses to the most frequently asked questions our staff and school board members are receiving. Please understand that we are unable to address individual emails and questions at this time, and encourage everyone to keep the FAQ as a ready reference.

Thank you for your ongoing support and cooperation in keeping our students and staff safe!

Sincerely,

Dr. Ben Drati, Superintendent