

August 30, 2021

Dear Plainville Families,

Keeping students and staff safe and in school is a top priority of the Plainville School District. We have learned a great deal over this past year and our current guidance and procedures reflect the most updated recommendations from the CDC and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

For the 2021-22 school year, we are offering an extra layer of protection to prevent the spread of COVID-19, our COVID-19 testing program at school. We will be providing two testing components: **symptomatic testing** for students who show symptoms of COVID-19 at school, and **test and stay** for students who may have been exposed while in school but are not showing symptoms. Each of these is a quick, non-invasive nasal swab that is collected under the supervision of a school nurse or trained health provider. Unlike COVID-19 tests of the past, these are not uncomfortable and easy for students to do themselves.

Students **only participate with permission** from a parent or guardian. It is important to the District that you are fully informed regarding the process and that we can answer any questions that you might have in advance of asking you to sign the consent form. Below we describe each part of our testing program, how they are conducted, and what they are used for.

Symptomatic testing is used when a student is showing symptoms of COVID-19 during school; students should not come to school if they are feeling sick while at home. Some symptoms of the virus look identical to other illnesses like the cold or flu, and this test tells us whether a symptomatic student has COVID-19 or not. This is a rapid test, and we receive the results of this test within 15 minutes. If a student has minimal symptoms and tests negative, they can remain in school.

Test and stay allows students who have had close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19 while at school to stay in school if the student is not showing symptoms. Instead of needing to quarantine and miss school, these students will take a daily rapid test while they remain in school as long as they are not symptomatic. Students participate in the test and stay for at least five days after they may have been exposed. Close contacts who are asymptomatic, fully vaccinated individuals are exempt from testing protocol, and are tested only if they are symptomatic.

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they must quarantine at home for the CDC-recommended ten days since symptoms appeared or ten days after the positive test before returning to school. The student must also be without a fever for 24 hours.

Although students who are vaccinated are much less likely to spread or contract the virus, it is important for us to create an inclusive environment for both vaccinated and unvaccinated students.

To participate in the program, you must sign the consent form on behalf of your student. To complete this consent online, visit <https://www.cic-health.com/consent/ma?district=null>. Click **Consent Now** and select **Plainville** as your school from the dropdown menu. If you choose to complete paper consent, please send it to the school nurse at your child's school. Please be aware that the consent form provided to us by DESE, includes routine testing as well in the event that schools determine a need for opting in to that testing program during the year. There is no charge for participating. If you have additional questions regarding the program, please contact Dr. Ann Dargon, Director of Student Services, at 508.699.1309.

It is our hope that these measures will work together to keep our schools safe and your student in school. Thanks again for your support during this challenging time. We look forward to welcoming your students back to the classroom and as always, I thank you for your continued support.

Superintendent David Raiche