



THOMAS ANDERSON
SUPERINTENDENT

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PAUL RODRIGUES ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
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NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 02740
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"We are committed to developing a community of learners who are academically proficient, demonstrate strong character and exhibit self-confidence."

KAREN A. TREADUP
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
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09/13/2021

Dear New Bedford Public Schools' Families,

At New Bedford Schools, keeping your students safe and in school is our top priority. 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 participating in two parts to this program: "**Symptomatic Testing**" for students who show symptoms of COVID-19 at school and "**Test and Stay**" for students who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and are identified as close contacts while in school but are not showing symptoms. Each of these is a quick, nasal swab 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 will only participate with permission from a parent or guardian. It is crucial to New Bedford Public Schools that you are fully informed regarding the process and that we answer any questions that you might have in advance of asking you to sign the consent form. Below, we describe each part of the testing program we will participate in, how tests will be conducted, and when they'll be used.

Symptomatic Testing is used when a student shows symptoms of COVID-19 during school. Please remember students should not come to school if they feel sick while at home. Some virus symptoms 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. This will greatly reduce the need to quarantine and miss school. These students will take a daily rapid test while in school as long as they are not symptomatic. Students will be tested for at least five consecutive days after they may have been exposed. They will be allowed to remain in school during this time which allows them to continue with in-person learning.

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

The New Bedford Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, ancestry, homelessness, gender identity, gender expression or immigration status.

Although vaccinated students are much less likely to spread or contract the virus, we must create an inclusive environment for vaccinated and unvaccinated students and encourage all students to participate in this program.

To participate in the program, you must sign this consent form on behalf of your student. There is no charge for participating. To learn more about our COVID-19 testing program, please visit <https://www.cic-health.com/consent/ma?district=New%20Bedford>. If you have additional questions regarding the program, please contact The Health Services Department at 508-997-4511 ext. 14430,14431, and 14432.

We 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.

Thank you,

Wanda Nunes MSN, BSN, RN

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