



WYANDANCH UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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SCHOOL-BASED TESTING - COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

There are many questions about the obligation to test in schools given a Yellow, Orange or Red designation. Below are some frequently asked questions. They will be revised as necessary, based on guidance from the New York State DOH.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Micro-Cluster Strategy

1. Q: What is the New York State Cluster Action Initiative?

A: Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Department of Health (DOH) instituted a Micro-Cluster Strategy on October 21, 2020, that uses data and factors to identify areas where clusters of COVID-19 may be occurring, assigning them as Red, Orange or Yellow Cluster Zones, and implementing appropriate recommendations and restrictions based on their rating.

2. Q: Why are we required to test students and staff in order to keep our schools open for in person learning?

A: The New York State Cluster Action Initiative requires schools to test students and staff to remain open for in-person learning.

3. Q: What are the testing requirements if our school is identified as being part of a yellow cluster zone?

A: If our schools are in a geographical area that is identified as a Yellow Zone by the DOH, school buildings would remain open and there would be random testing of 20% of the combined in-person staff and student population over the two-week period immediately following the announcement of a Yellow Zone designation. If the results of the testing reveal that the positivity rate among those tested is lower than the Yellow Zone's current 7-day positivity rate, testing at that school will no longer be required to continue.

4. Q: Is the district currently considered to be in a "Yellow Zone"?

A: No. Currently, the Babylon UFSB is not in the Yellow Zone. The COVID testing information is being shared so that the community is aware of the guidelines that the district will need to follow should the positivity rate increase.

5. Q: What are the testing requirements if our school is identified as being part of an Orange or Red cluster zone?

A: If our schools are in a geographical area that is identified as an Orange or Red Zone by the DOH, a provision for returning to in-person instruction in an Orange or Red Zone that would require testing (20 % when in an Orange Zone or 30 % when in a Red Zone), of students and staff on a monthly rolling basis.

6. Q: How will the sample of in-person students and staff to be tested be selected?

A: The testing sample will be randomly selected electronically.

7. Q: Will my child be required to test?

A: No. Parental consent must be obtained before any child is tested for COVID-19.

8. Q: If my child does not test, will they still be able to attend school in-person?

A: Yes. If 20% of the student/staff population tests, and the results demonstrate a positivity rate that is lower than in the greater Yellow Zone, the school will be able to open. If not, the school will close and move to remote instruction.

9. Q: Can I have my child tested independently and provide the district with the results?

A: Yes! However, the test needs to be done during the period in which the school goes into the Yellow Zone and is conducting its own testing. Independent testing may result in a fee you may have to pay privately to the lab conducting the test.

10. Q: Can a student or staff member be selected twice as part of the sample of in-person students and staff to be tested?

A: No, not for the same batch of testing for a zone designation. However, they may be tested for any subsequent zone designations.

11. Q: How will we be notified if staff or our child has been chosen for random testing?

A: As with all important districtwide notifications, you will be contacted via email if you or your child is selected to be tested. Parents are encouraged to make sure that their contact information in the eSchool Parent Portal is current. Information on how to update your contact information can be found at <https://parent.ioeducation.com/babylon>.

12. Q: What COVID-19 test will the district be using?

A: BinaxNow Rapid Testing Kits will be utilized to test. This test is a quick, less invasive nasal swab that can be easily administered. This test is selected and provided by the New York State Department of Health.

13. Q: Is there a cost associated with the test given in school?

A: No, COVID-19 tests conducted under the auspices of the school district are free to students and staff, courtesy of the County.

14. Q: How long does it take to get test results back?

A: These are rapid tests and results are available in 15 minutes. Parents or staff will be confidentially notified by our medical partner in the event of a positive test. Healthcare professionals will offer medical guidance based on CDC recommended guidelines and confer with the patient's regular physician if authorized to do so.

15. Q: What happens with the test results?

A: Our partner healthcare provider is required to upload test results in the Electronic Clinical Lab Reporting System (ECLRS) that assists Suffolk County with identified zone data and limiting the spread of COVID-19.

16. Q: Who will facilitate the testing?

A: Our medical partner will provide their teams of experienced medical assistants, RN's and physician assistants to carry out the rapid testing on-site.

17. Q: Where will testing take place?

A: Testing for a Yellow Zone designation will take place in all three schools. Locations for Orange and Red Zone testing are yet to be determined.

18. Q: Can parents be there when their child is being tested?

A: Due to the capacity restrictions limiting visitors in our buildings, we cannot permit parents to be present when students are being tested. If you have a strong preference to be with your child during testing, you will be able to take them on your own to have a COVID19 test and to submit the test results to the district.

19. Q: What happens if my child's test results are positive for COVID-19?

A: If your child receives a positive test result, the school nurse will contact you. You should then contact your child's health provider immediately to review the test results and discuss next steps. Your child must remain at home until they receive clearance from the SCDOH to return to school.

20. Q: Are the test results shared with community members?

A: No. The testing process and results are strictly confidential and shared only with the SCDOH and school nurse/Principal.

21. Q: Can community members participate in the testing process?

A. Unfortunately, no. Only students and staff may be tested under the management of the school district.

22. Q: Will someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past be included in the random selection?

A: Per CDC recommendations, persons who have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 3 months will be excluded from random selection. If you are notified that your child was selected to be tested and this applies to you, please let a building administrator know.