



East Greenbush Central School District

ADMINISTRATION CENTER

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Jeffrey P. Simons

Superintendent

January 5, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As we have communicated to you recently, our district in coordination with Questar III BOCES, has been preparing a COVID-19 Testing Program informed by New York State's Micro-Cluster Strategy. I am pleased to announce that the East Greenbush Central School District is moving forward with these plans and we expect to receive our first batch of COVID-19 testing kits this week.

The state's micro-cluster strategy will mandate testing in Yellow, Orange, or Red micro-cluster zones, based on infection rates, daily new cases and hospital capacity. If a zip code, census tract or region is placed in one of those zones by the state, there will be restrictions for schools.

While East Greenbush Central School District is NOT currently in one of these zones, we are preparing to begin testing 20%-30% of students and staff in our schools should we enter a Yellow, Orange or Red Zone.

Testing

The rapid test involves use of the Abbott, BinaxNow Antigen tests provided by the NYS Department of Health. School nurses will administer the tests, which involves a non-invasive cotton swab swiping just inside the lowermost portion of the nostril. These are not the deep-sinus swab tests that are conducted at medical facilities. The test results are available within minutes. Individual test results will only be shared with the family, testing personnel, the local department of health and district administrators in the event that a result is positive and requires contact tracing.

The district will test a pool of individuals representative of all schools within the district. If a student or staff member tests positive, they will be quarantined at home until they are released by the county department of health. The district will inform the school community of any positive cases as it has done in the past. [View EGCSO COVID-19 Testing Plan.](#)

Consent Form

Parents of students in the hybrid program will be receiving a Consent Form for COVID-19 Testing today via email. Just as we have asked for your continued assistance with following our

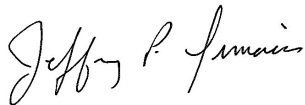
COVID-19 protocols, we would need your permission to administer tests to your children. Once you receive the consent form, please fill it out by Friday, January 8. (The consent form will only be sent to parents of students enrolled in the hybrid program. Students who are learning in a full virtual setting are not required to be tested.)

Testing is not mandatory and no one will be excluded from school or work because they choose not to be tested. However, if we do not receive consent from the minimum required percentage of students and staff, we would be forced to close our schools and shift to fully remote instruction.

If you have any questions about our testing program, please contact our COVID-19 Coordinator Karen Vincent at VincentKa@egcsd.org or call your school nurse.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Simons
Superintendent of Schools

- [EGCSD COVID-19 Testing Plan](#)
- [Video: COVID-19 Testing Process](#)

FAQ: COVID-19 Testing Program

Q: Why is the district planning to conduct COVID-19 testing?

A: If the state designates our schools in a Yellow, Orange or Red Zone, we would be required to test asymptomatic students and staff in order to keep our schools open to in-person learning.

Q: Is the district in a Yellow, Orange or Red zone?

A: No. However, the COVID-19 infection rate has been steadily increasing since November and public health experts have predicted a surge upon a surge in January following the holidays. We have made these preparations so that if we enter a micro-cluster zone, we can be ready to start testing and keep our schools open for in-person learning.

Q: Who will administer the COVID-19 tests?

A: School nurses will be trained to administer the COVID-19 antigen tests.

Q: When and where will testing take place?

A: The district has created a schedule for students and staff to be tested. Staff will be tested during work hours on Wednesdays in their school’s health office or a location TBD. Families will have the choice to have students tested according to the following schedule by appointment. Parents are required to accompany their children to the testing. Testing dates are TBD as the district has not yet been designated a micro-cluster zone by New York State.

School Level	Date/Time	Location
All Levels K-12	1st Tuesday Evening 4:00 pm-8:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Columbia High School Main Lobby
	1st Saturday Morning 9:00 am-12:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transportation Department (drive-through)• Columbia High School Main Lobby
	2nd Tuesday Evening 4:00 pm-8:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goff Middle School Cafeteria• Donald P. Sutherland Elementary School Main Lobby
	2nd Saturday Morning 9:00 am-12:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transportation Department (drive-through)

Q: Why did you select Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings for the testing schedule?

A: We wanted to make the testing periods convenient for our families by offering evening and weekend times at multiple locations. Administering tests on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings also allows sufficient time for our district to conduct contact tracing, in the event of positive cases, before students come back to school. (The days after testing do not have students in school - Live Virtual Wednesday and Sunday.)

Q: When will parents receive test results?

A: Parents will receive test results on the same day as the test is conducted.

Q: What if my child has COVID-19 symptoms? Will they be able to be tested?

A: No. This testing program is only available for asymptomatic students. If students have COVID-19 symptoms, they should follow the current procedures and contact their health care provider and notify the school.

Q: Is there a cost for students/staff to be tested?

A: No. All costs are being covered by the state and district.

Q: How do I give consent for my child to be tested at school?

A: Please submit the online Consent Form for COVID-19 Testing. It is being emailed to all employees and parents/guardians of students enrolled in the hybrid model.

Q: How long is the testing process expected to take?

A: Each test takes only a few minutes. The results will be available in approximately 15 minutes and families will be contacted the same day with results.

Q: How many people need to be tested each week to keep East Greenbush schools open?

A: Our schools must test 20% of in-person students and staff over a two-week period to remain open if we enter a Yellow Zone.

Q: How will I be notified if my child has been selected to be tested?

A: Parents/guardians will be contacted to make an appointment.

Q: Can I be present when my child is tested?

A: Yes. A parent/guardian must accompany the child to testing.

Q: What if I prefer to get my child tested offsite?

A: The district is permitted to accept test results from an outside provider.

Q: If I do not consent to testing, will my student be forced to switch to full remote instruction?

A: Testing is not mandatory and no one will be excluded from school or work because they choose not to be tested. However, if we do not receive consent from the minimum required percentage of students and staff, we would be forced to close our schools and shift to fully remote instruction.

Q: Can parents/guardians or family members get tested too?

A: No. Our testing program is only available to enrolled students and employees of the district. Parents and other family members can find COVID testing sites here:

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>.

Q: What happens if a student tests positive?

A: The parent/guardian would be notified by phone call. Instructions would be given regarding mandatory quarantine. The Rensselaer County Health Department would be notified of the positive case.

Q: Will families of students who test negative be provided with those test results? If so, how long will it be until those results are received?

A: Yes. Parents will receive an email notifying them of the negative test result. Negative test results will be provided the same day of testing.

Q: I have questions about this testing plan. Where can I get more answers?

A: If you have any questions about our testing program, please contact our COVID-19 Coordinator Karen Vincent at VincentKa@egcsd.org or call your school nurse.