



Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are looking forward to welcoming your child back to school! Our priority is to provide safe, healthy and supportive learning environments for our youngest learners in pre-school through the second grade. To safely return to school, we are providing COVID-19 testing for all returning students. Your consent is needed to test your child and better ensure their safety. Your child cannot attend in-school learning without your consent to conduct COVID-19 testing. There is no cost for the test.

We are doing many things to promote safety and protection of your child when he or she returns to school. Testing all students is one thing we are doing. In addition, everyone in schools must wear a mask, stand six feet apart, wash their hands using soap and water or hand sanitizer, and have few children in a classroom.

Below is more information about the COVID-19 test that your child will receive when you sign the consent. Please read the information carefully before signing the consent. Please contact your school nurse if you have any questions. The test is not painful and we will know the results in 15 minutes. We will contact you with the test results.

We know students are ready and eager to return to school. We know our schools are prepared to welcome your child. We cannot wait to see your children in the classrooms next week!

With warm regards,

The School District of Philadelphia

In-School COVID-19 Testing for Students



In our efforts to plan for our students to return to school in the safest manner possible, the School District of Philadelphia is providing COVID-19 testing for all students. COVID-19 testing is part of a comprehensive multilayer approach to the safety and protection of students and staff. The multilayer approach means this is not dependent on a single strategy, instead all strategies are “layered” and interdependent work together to increase the safety for students and staff. The layers include promoting behaviors that reduce spread (e.g., mask use, social distancing, hand hygiene); maintaining healthy environments (e.g., cleaning and disinfection, ventilation, signage); maintaining healthy operations (e.g., scheduling, digital learning, class sizes); and preparing for when someone gets sick as well as screening all students and staff for signs and symptoms of illness. COVID-19 testing is an added layer of precaution that is not conducted in isolation, but will be used along with the other approaches.

About The Test

The School District will provide Abbott’s BinaxNOW COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test to students for whom we have received prior parent/guardian consent. This test is a quick nasal swab of both nostrils. It is found to be fast and painless. (It is NOT the deep-sinus swabs that some individuals have found uncomfortable.) The test involves inserting a small swab, like a Q-Tip, into the front of the nose in both nostrils; and results will be available in 15 minutes.



Testing Consent

COVID-19 testing will be required for all students participating in hybrid learning in grades PreK-2. Because testing will need to be performed regardless of a parent or guardian’s availability at the time a test will be administered, prior consent for testing is required for all students who participate in hybrid learning. To consent to this testing, you need to review the consent form, complete the requested information, and submit it to the School District of Philadelphia. If you picked hybrid participation for your child but do not complete and return this form acknowledging your consent to the testing program, your child will continue to participate in their class through digital participation as they have been doing this school year. [Please click here to complete the consent form.](#)

HOW TESTING WORKS



Your child will participate in COVID-19 routine testing.



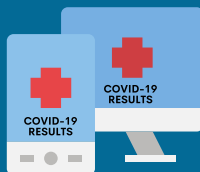
We use a rapid antigen test. It’s quick, easy, and painless.



15 min

Results from the test come back in only 15 minutes.

THE RESULTS



Families will be notified of their child’s results by email or text on the day their child was tested.



If your child tests positive, he or she will need to stay home for 10 days, and may also need to have their results confirmed with a PCR or molecular test. Students can participate in digital learning if their health allows.

To learn more information about in-school COVID-19 testing for students, please visit www.philasd.org/studenthealth/COVIDtesting.

Frequently Asked Questions About Student COVID-19 Testing

The School District of Philadelphia will update our COVID-19 Testing page as more information becomes available. The following are frequently asked questions for families.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q: Why is the School District of Philadelphia conducting COVID-19 testing?

A: The School District is committed to providing high-quality, in-person education in a manner that safeguards the health of students, teachers and staff. Testing helps us to quickly identify people positive with COVID-19 so they can isolate, and their close contacts can quarantine. This helps to limit the spread of COVID-19 in the school setting and beyond. Testing will help to reduce the likelihood of large outbreaks. Some people who have COVID-19 do not have symptoms and can spread the disease.

Q: Is there a cost associated with testing at school?

A: No. There is no cost for students to participate in testing.

Q: If my child is currently participating in digital learning, does he/she need to be tested?

A: No. Remote students are currently excluded from having to be tested since they are not in-person in a school district building.

Q: What happens if I don't submit consent?

A: If you picked hybrid participation for your child but do not complete and return your consent to the testing program, your child will continue to participate in their class through digital participation as they have been doing this school year. You must submit consent by the day that your child returns to your school building; this is the due date, and we need all students to participate. If your child comes to school on their first day back for in-person instruction without a consent form on file, principals and school staff will contact you to obtain consent.

Q: What if my child cannot be tested due to their documented disability?

A: If your child has a documented disability and testing would impair your child's mental or physical health due to that disability, please contact the school nurse to discuss how to proceed.

Q: Can parents accompany their children to be tested?

A: Unfortunately, no. To reduce the risk of COVID-19 being introduced into the building, parents will not be able to accompany their children during the test. We understand that this may feel scary, particularly for younger children. Our school nurses will ensure the testing is performed swiftly, gently, and in a positive environment for all children.

Q: What happens if my child becomes overly anxious and cannot tolerate the test?

A: We will do our best to complete the test, but we may need to skip your child and test them on another day.

Q: How can I help prepare my child for the test (especially for younger children)?

A: You should talk to your child about testing. We encourage you to tell them that the school nurse needs to make sure they are healthy, so they are going to do a test for the virus by

rubbing a small cotton swab inside the front part of their nose. Remind your child that it's okay that the nurse performs this test and that it's quick, safe, and gentle.

Q: How much instruction time will students miss the day they are tested?

A: The testing will not take long. We do not expect any child to be out of class for more than 15-20 minutes total from the time that they are picked up at their classroom until they are escorted back to class.

Q: Does everyone still have to wear masks and practice social distancing?

A: Yes. Testing does not replace the other important steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19: wearing face masks, maintaining physical distance, and hand hygiene, and frequent cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces.

Q: What if I have additional questions?

A: Contact your child's principal and/or school nurse.

TESTING PROCESS

Q: How often will my child be tested?

A: This program will test both students without symptoms (Asymptomatic Testing) and students with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (Symptomatic Testing). Over the course of five weeks (February 22 - March 22), 20% of students in the total general education hybrid population at each school will be tested weekly; **all students participating in hybrid learning will be tested at least one time.** This will be done in randomized groups; each student will be assigned to a Group A, B, C, D or E.

- Week A - 20% Week of February 22
- Week B - 20% Week of March 1
- Week C - 20% Week of March 8
- Week D - 20% Week of March 15
- Week E - 20% Week of March 22

Q: Students who are unable to wear a face mask?

A: Due to a medical or mental health condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **will be tested weekly** (February 22 - June 11). These students and classmates or staff in their classroom could potentially be at higher risk of exposure or transmission of COVID-19, since these students may not be able to consistently or properly wear a face mask and social distancing may not be able to be observed.

Q: What type of test will my child receive?

A: The school district will provide Abbott's BinaxNOW COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test to students for whom we have received prior parent/guardian consent. This test is a quick nasal swab of both nostrils. It is found to be fast and painless. (It is **NOT** the deep-sinus swabs that some individuals have found uncomfortable.) The test involves inserting a small swab, like a Q-Tip, into the front of the nose in both nostrils; and results will be available in 15 minutes.

Q: Who will perform the test on my child?

A: The test will be administered by Certified School Nurses who have been formally trained by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health.

Q: Will my child's teacher also be tested?

A: Yes, all staff will be tested weekly.

TEST RESULTS**Q: What happens if my child tests positive?**

A: In the event a student tests positive, the student will be taken to the medical waiting room and the parent will be informed immediately to pick the student up from school. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) will be notified and the school will cooperate in contact tracing with the PDPH. Anyone identified as a close contact will also be sent home and will be required to quarantine. The school will put out its standard notification of a positive case and follow disinfecting protocols.

Q: When will I receive my child's results?

A: In most instances, parents/guardians will receive results by email or text within 1 hour of their child being tested.

Q: What isolation instructions will be given if student tests positive?

A: You should keep your child home from school and contact their physician until all of the following are true:

- at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms AND
 - 24 hours free of fever without the use of fever reducing medication, (Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) AND
 - symptoms are improving
- OR
- A clinician has evaluated the student and documented an alternative diagnosis and that the student may return to work sooner than 10 days.

Q: Why would my child have to get a second test?

A: If the BinaxNOW test yields an unexpected result defined as positive in an asymptomatic person or negative in a symptomatic person, the nurse will perform a confirmatory test to confirm the rapid antigen test result. If your child does not get a confirmatory test at school, your child must remain out of school and away from others for at least 10 days. If the confirmatory test is done off site, the results can be forwarded to the school nurse in your building. If symptoms develop, your child must also remain out of school until symptoms improve and he or she is fever free without the use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours.