



Updates from the District Office – Yellow Zone Testing Consent

December 4, 2020

Dear BSCSD Parents, Caregivers, and Staff –

As noted in our [November 16](#), [November 24](#), and [December 2](#) Updates, we are making preparations for COVID-19 testing should any of our schools be designated within “yellow zones” under the [New York State Cluster Action Initiative](#). Our plan is based on the most recent [Interim Guidance](#) from the NYS Department of Health which states in part that,

*“schools in yellow zones must test 20% of **in-person** students, faculty and staff 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 the 20% of 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. A positivity rate in a school that is lower than in the yellow zone is a sufficient demonstration that in-person instruction is not a significant driver of local viral spread.”*

Based on this information (which is subject to change based on revised state guidance), we will move forward with our plan including the consent forms needed to random test our in-person students and staff. First, a few points of clarification regarding testing and consent:

Q1: Am I required to provide consent for testing?

A1: No. Consent is strictly voluntary.

Q2: Is there a cost to staff or parents for the testing?

A2: No. The District is covering the cost of testing.

Q3: What is the testing process?

A3: Tests are administered through a nasal swab (just inside the nostril) and take seconds to conduct. Results are determined within 15 minutes and positive case individuals, if there are any, are immediately notified.

Q4: Who is conducting the tests?

A4: Registered nurses from Adirondack Health and Wellness will be conducting the tests.

Q5: What happens if I/my child tests positive?

A5: Anyone who tests positive will be notified immediately and sent home for follow-up with your physician.

Q6: When will the tests start?

A6: If we are designated a yellow zone, we will notify you with dates and specific logistics for where and when the testing will take place if you/your child are randomly selected.

Q7: *May I return to work/class while awaiting my test results?*

A7: Yes. Based on daily responses to our Pinpoint screening, any staff or students who are in attendance are presumed to be healthy. It is possible, however, that asymptomatic individuals will test positive. Please be sure to stay home/keep your child home if they are not feeling well and are showing symptoms noted on the Pinpoint screening question.

Q8: *Can I/my child still attend school if I do not provide consent?*

A8: Yes. Again, you/your child are presumed to be healthy based on your attendance after completing the daily Pinpoint screening.

Q9: *What if the District does not receive enough student or staff consent?*

A9: While we do not envision this being an issue, this would likely be a school-by-school decision. If, for example, we did not receive the needed consent for a given school, that school would have to move to fully remote instruction until such time that we received enough consent to conduct the required testing or we were removed from the micro-cluster list.

Q10: *I heard that the yellow zone testing requirement is going to change to 10% of in-person students and staff. Is that accurate?*

A10: It is possible that the requirement will change based on changes to orange and red zone requirements. However, at this time we do not have any additional guidance from the NYS Department of Health that would change the 20% rule we are currently working under.

Staff and Parent Consent: We are currently working with our Pinpoint screener vendor on a consent form that will be built into the application. On Monday, we will let you know if this will be done or if we will use a Google Survey form. We will also update you on our regional status.

Should you have any additional questions, please contact us at schoolopening@bscsd.org.

Thank you!

Ken Slentz
Superintendent of Schools