

What's Happening in NYC Public Schools

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schools.nyc.gov/messagesforfamilies

February 4, 2022

This Family Update provides important information about our latest health and safety policies. These policies will take effect on Monday, February 7, 2022.

Contents:

- **COVID-19 Testing**
 - [Increased In-School COVID-19 Testing](#)
 - [Home Test Kits](#)
 - [COVID-19 Testing Sites](#)
- **Attendance**

COVID-19 Testing

Increased In-School COVID-19 Testing

In anticipation of the Midwinter Break, we are increasing the number of students who will be included in the city's in-school random surveillance testing program. Beginning on February 7, schools will test the larger of either:

- 10 percent of the school's student enrollment in grades 1 through 12, up to a cap of 250 students
- 20 percent of the school's unvaccinated student population

This change allows schools with highly vaccinated student populations to test a larger group of students every week. Additionally, 10 percent of staff continue to be able to get tested weekly.

We encourage all families to consent to in-school testing through their NYC Schools Account (schoolsaccount.nyc) or return a signed paper form to the school. More information about COVID-19

testing in schools and printable version of the consent form in multiple languages can be found at schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting.

Testing is a critical part of keeping schools open and protecting the health of our students, staff, and neighbors. Thank you to those families who have already consented to testing for your support and partnership in keeping our school communities safe!

Home Test Kits

During the week of February 14, schools will distribute at-home rapid test kits to all staff and students ages two and up. You can watch videos in multiple languages on how to use your test kit at schools.nyc.gov/HomeRapidTestKits.

We strongly encourage all staff and students to take an at-home rapid test **before returning to school on February 28**, regardless of their vaccination status. Staff and students are not required to show proof of a negative test result before being allowed to return to school.

If your child tests positive on a home test, your child must isolate for 5 days if they are in grades K-12, or for 10 days if they are in a LYFE, EarlyLearn (infant & toddler), 3K, or Pre-K classroom, following the positive result. Please contact your child's school immediately and report the test results. K-12 Students who test positive for COVID-19 and are isolating at home will continue to be provided asynchronous remote instruction and access to office hours with their teacher.

If your child has recovered from COVID-19 in the last 90 days, they will not receive a test kit and may continue to attend school unless they develop COVID-like symptoms. You can find charts that outline the steps you should take if your child feels sick, was exposed to COVID-19, or tested positive for COVID-19, at schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness.

COVID-19 Testing Sites

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) continues to open new testing sites throughout the five boroughs. We strongly encourage that all students get tested for COVID-19, through a PCR, lab-based rapid test, or a home test kit on a regular basis, regardless of vaccination status. For a list of testing sites, including sites with at-home rapid tests, call 212-COVID19, visit nyc.gov/covidtest, text "COVID TEST" to 855-48, or call 311 to find a nearby testing site. Additionally, many pharmacies and doctors' offices are offering COVID-19 testing. Please check with your pediatrician's office or local pharmacy to see if you can schedule a test.

Attendance

Attendance Update

In light of the 95% reduction in COVID cases reported in schools since the peak of the Omicron surge, the Attendance Policy has been updated. Effective immediately, students participating in asynchronous remote instruction may be marked present only when isolating consistent with health guidance due to a positive COVID-19 test result.

Your school will provide details about how children in those circumstances can access remote instruction and office hours. Students who are absent for reasons other than a positive COVID-19 test result or school/building closure will be marked absent and can no longer be marked present for remote instruction.