**Introducing The Pooled Testing Program**

**to Families**

#### **Template Email to Families**

**Subject Line:** Getting our students back to in-person learning: Sign up for (School Name)’s new COVID-19 Testing Program

Dear (Families, Parents/ Guardians, etc):

At (Name of School), we miss seeing our students in-person. We want to bring all of our students back to school safely.

We are starting a voluntary **free weekly COVID-19 testing program** to help keep our students, staff and community safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Regular COVID-19 testing of students and staff will help us lower the risk of the disease in our school by finding positive cases of COVID-19 quickly. The testing program will also help identify positive cases in people who do not show any symptoms. Testing will allow us to have regular in-person learning while making everyone feel safer when in-person.

**We hope that you will participate by signing a consent form for your student**. The more students who participate, the safer our school will be!

**What is the COVID-19 testing program?**

* Participating students will be tested for COVID-19 once a week by our staff/ nurses
* The program starts on DATE
* The test is performed at school at (LOCATION)
* The COVID-19 test is quick, easy and it does not hurt. It is a nasal test that gently swabs the lower inner nostril, and most students will be able to swab themselves. We will accommodate all students’ needs to help them be comfortable during the test.
* The test is free. You do not need to pay for the test or have insurance to get the test.
* The program is optional, but we hope you will participate to help us stop the spread of COVID-19.

**How can my student participate in the program?**

To participate in the testing program, you need to **sign a consent form** for your student. You only need to sign up once for the weekly testing.

*For districts using low-PII software:* This form gives consent to share student information if needed. **No personal health information is provided to anyone outside of the district during the first round of pooled testing.** Our school nurses will call any students in a positive pool to explain next steps and discuss follow-up testing options. Test results will only be shared with the Department of Public Health if a student tests positive on an individual follow-up test.

*For districts using high-PII software:* This form gives us permission to share student information with the technology platform we use to track testing. Student information will only be shared with the Department of Public Health and other departments if a student tests positive in an individual test.

**There are 2 ways to sign up:**

* Sign up electronically - check your email/ text for a link
* Sign up by printing / signing the attached form and [mail it in / send in with your student]. Or you can request to have a paper form mailed to you [customize based on your school’s process]

The program is voluntary. Students are not required to participate in the program. If you do not consent to participate, your student can still come to school. We strongly encourage your student to participate to help us reduce the spread of the COVID-19 disease.

**How does it work?**

The type of testing we are using is called “Pooled Testing.” Pooled testing makes it easier and faster to find individuals who might have COVID-19. Here is how it works:

* Participating students are tested individually once a week with a nasal swab. Most students will be able to swab themselves.
  + [Video: Learn how to do a nasal swab, from a 2nd grader](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJML8xBEKGk)
* Then, ten student swabs will be placed in the same tube, creating a group of swabs called a “pool.” The pool is sent to a lab where the whole pool is tested for COVID-19 at one time.
* If the pool test comes back negative, all students in the pool are COVID-negative. In this case, you will not hear from us.
* If the pool test comes back positive, it means that at least one person in the pool is COVID-positive. In this case, all students in that pool will come back to (name of location) the next morning for an individual follow-up test [optional: insert guidance on what your school will do between positive pool & individual result].
* [If using *only* BinaxNOW] Individual follow-up tests produce results in 15 mins. If the individual follow-up test comes back negative, the student returns to school as normal. If the individual follow-up test comes back positive, we will work with families to make arrangements to have the student quarantine and get connected to care. We/the [insert] Board of Health will also reach out to start the contact tracing process.
* [If using BinaxNOW & indiv PCRs] Students will receive two follow-up tests - one with fast results that come back in 15 minutes and one confirmatory test that takes 24 hours to return results. If either test comes back positive, we will work with families to make arrangements to have the student quarantine and get connected to care.
* [If using *only* indiv PCRs] Individual follow-up tests will be sent to the lab. We will receive results within 24 hours. While waiting for results, [insert school protocol here]. If the individual follow-up test comes back positive, we will work with families to make arrangements to have the student quarantine and get connected to care. If the individual follow-up test comes back negative, the student returns to school as normal.

Learn more about our COVID-19 Testing Program: (link to relevant website) We will send more information before the program begins.

Have Questions? Contact (CONTACT NAME) at (EMAIL & PHONE). Thank you and we hope to see your student soon!

Sincerely,

NAME OF CONTACT

#### **Template Text Message**

(Name of School) is starting a weekly COVID-19 testing program to help keep our school community safe and allow us to have regular in-person learning. Testing is free and voluntary. Please sign a consent form for your student to participate: (webpage or link to form) or call (Name of Contact/ Phone Number).

#### **Template Robo-Call**

(Name of School) is starting a weekly COVID-19 testing program to help keep our school community safe and allow us to have regular in-person learning. The program is free and is voluntary. We strongly encourage all students to participate to help keep our school safe!

Please sign a consent form for your student to participate: visit (webpage or link to form) or call (Name of Contact/ Phone Number) for more information.

#### **Template Social Media Posts - Facebook & Instagram**

(Name of School) is starting a weekly COVID-19 testing program to help keep our school community safe & allow us to have regular in-person learning. The program is free & is voluntary. We strongly encourage all students to participate to help keep our school safe!

Please sign a consent form for your student to participate: visit (webpage or link to form) or call (Name of Contact/ Phone Number) for more information.

#### **Template Social Media Posts - Twitter**

(Name of School) is starting a weekly COVID-19 testing program to help our community safe & have regular in-person learning. Testing is free & voluntary. Sign a consent form to participate: visit (webpage or link to form) or call (Name of Contact/ Phone Number).