



James F. Sullivan Middle School
150 Draper St.
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

Ian Charles
Principal

Michael Banks
Assistant Principal

LPS Pool Testing Program for Parent & Guardians

Dear Families, Parents and Guardians:

On February 22, 2021, we will begin to bring back students for in-person learning. As part of the re-opening, we will be offering voluntary **free weekly COVID-19 testing**. This testing will lower the risk of spread of COVID-19 by helping to identify those positive cases in people who do not show any symptoms of COVID-19.

We hope that you will participate by signing a consent form for your child. The more students and staff who participate, the safer our schools will be!

What is the COVID-19 testing program?

- Participating students will be tested for COVID-19 once a week.
- The program starts on February 22, 2021 for all students who are in-person learning. More students will be included as we continue to bring back additional students and staff.
- The test is performed at each school.
- The COVID-19 test is quick, easy and it does not hurt. It is a nasal test that gently swabs the lower inner nostril. 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 child. You only need to sign up once for the weekly testing. If you decide NOT TO PARTICIPATE, you do not need to fill out the consent form.

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.

Please find below links to the online consent form:

- [English](#)
- [Arabic](#)
- [Khmer](#)
- [Lao](#)
- [Portuguese](#)
- [Spanish](#)
- [Swahili](#)
- [Vietnamese](#)

We Promote the Love of Learning

There will also be a downloadable Consent Form posted on our website.

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

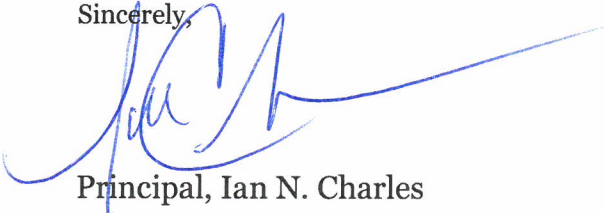
How does it work?

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 - the swab test is called a “sample”.
 - Video: Learn how to do a nasal swab, from a 2nd grader
- Then, 5-10 student and staff samples (swabs) from the same class will be mixed together into a group of samples, called a “pool.” Some classes may have more than one pool depending on the number of students and staff that have consented to providing swabs for testing. Every swab taken will be placed in a pool which is then sent to a lab, and the whole group/pool will be tested for COVID-19 at one time. Keep in mind that every swab taken will be tested but will be done in groups of swabs.
- If the pool test comes back negative, all students and staff in the pool are COVID-negative.
- If the pool test comes back positive, it means that at least one person in the group is COVID-positive. In this case, all students and staff that are in that pool will come back to their school the next morning for an individual follow-up test.
- Individual follow-up tests produce results in 15 minutes. If the individual follow-up test comes back positive, the student will quarantine and we will begin contact tracing. If the individual follow up test comes back negative, we will do one more confirmatory individual test that goes to the lab to be sure the negative result is accurate.

Have Questions? Contact your School Nurse, The Family Resource Center (978-674-4321) or The Equity and Engagement Office (978-674-4326). Thank you and we hope to see your child soon!

Sincerely,



Principal, Ian N. Charles