



## LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Dear Parents and Guardians:

We wanted to inform you that the Lowell Public Schools has continued in-person special education assessments throughout the district's decision(s) for remote learning. In addition, Lowell Public Schools has continued to follow all the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) guidelines for safety. The following is an outline of what to expect if you are involved with Special Education Testing.

If you have a **signed consent for an initial evaluation or additional testing on a re-evaluation**, you can expect a call to schedule an in-person testing session. If you have not received a phone call in regards to your student's evaluation, and have signed a consent, please reach out to the special education team by phone or email.

- If you have not signed consent it will be mailed to parent/guardian
  - If parent/guardian agrees, the consent can be signed on date of testing (consents must be signed before testing can occur)
- School Psychologists/Related Service Providers will contact parent/guardian to schedule an appointment for testing
  - Provide date and time
  - Identify location of testing
- School Psychologists/Related Service Providers will schedule a follow up call, if needed, to ask basic screening questions and will conduct testing interviews via zoom or phone conference
- Upon arrival to the designated testing area all persons will need to check in and wait to be escorted to the testing site. Parents will need to wait in the designated area and cannot escort their child to the testing area, unless the school psychologist/related service provider has made a determination that it is needed.

- Both the child and the parent/guardian must follow PPE requirements unless medical documentation is provided at the date of the testing session.
  - During the test, the school psychologists/related service providers will maintain 6 feet of distance without interfering with the standardized testing procedures. School psychologists/related service providers will notify and consult with parents if mask wearing and/or other PPE guidelines may impact the assessment results in order to determine a path forward.
- During testing a designated area meeting all PPE requirements will be identified. Tables will be positioned to ensure safety and a plexiglass divider will be placed in the middle of the table.
- Prior to testing any materials needed will be sanitized and cleaned properly.
- During testing, breaks will be permitted; however, your child will need to remain in designated areas and continue to follow PPE guidelines.
- Upon completion of testing, the school psychologist/related service provider will provide the parent/guardian with necessary information on next steps and timeline.

### **General Testing Conditions**

This document addresses all Lowell Public School testing (initials and re-evaluations) requirements during the pandemic. These guidelines address all required Special Education assessments necessary to determine eligibility, including: psychological, academic, and related services (Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech, Social Work, Assistive Technology, Orientation and Mobility, Vision).

**General testing scenario:** 1:1 testing will be conducted in an office/space that has been designated and meets **ALL** PPE requirements and ensures all safety requirements are met (per DESE guidelines).

- Appropriate space requirements
  - Amount of persons in the room
  - Appropriate sanitization requirements
  - ALL Students and Parents/Guardians would be required to follow PPE guidelines during testing
  - Basic Screening Questions asked prior to testing will include the following:
    - Have you been feeling sick and experiencing any of the following symptoms: Fever, cough, shortness of breath, headache, or any other flu like symptoms?
    - Have you been exposed to someone suspected or confirmed to COVID-19?
    - Have you traveled out of state within the last 14 days?
    - Have you been tested for COVID-19?
- **If any of the above symptoms or conditions have been answered YES then the test will be rescheduled.**

**Spaces:** Testing sites will be designated based on location within the community and ability to follow PPE guidelines.

- Classroom/office space
- PPE guidelines
- Appropriate waiting area for parents/guardians

**PPE materials needed, but not limited to:**

- Masks
- Face Shields
- Plexiglass divider
- Gowns
- Gloves
- Hand sanitizer

**Parent/Guardian Attendance/Interviews**

- Zoom or phone conference interviews will be conducted, unless School Psychologists determine face to face interviews are needed.
- For face to face interviews, no more than one parent/guardian will be allowed to participate. No additional children or family members will be allowed to attend.
- Basic Screening Questions during face to face interviews include the following:
  - Have you been feeling sick and experiencing any of the following symptoms: Fever, cough, shortness of breath, headache, or any other flu like symptoms?
  - Have you been exposed to someone suspected or confirmed to COVID-19?
  - Have you traveled out of state within the last 14 days?
  - Have you been tested for COVID-19?
    - **If any of the above symptoms or conditions have been answered YES then the interview will be rescheduled or completed virtually.**

**Use of Translator**

- If translations are needed then the evaluator will utilize Language Line and/or Baystate.
- In person translators will follow all safety guidelines put forth by Lowell Public Schools

If you have any questions please contact the special education office.

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Thank you

Michael Lovato, Special Education Director