

Dear Cleveland Hill School Community;

The **Erie County Department of Health** has asked that Erie County school districts share the following information with you regarding the point-of-care “rapid” COVID-19 testing. Specifically, who is eligible for the COVID-19 point-of-care tests. These tests are intended for **symptomatic students** and **symptomatic school staff** who have been excluded from school or work because of COVID-like symptoms, and who are **not under quarantine**.

The ECDOH reports that many of the rapid testing calls are made by parents who learn that their child is under quarantine – sometimes even before a contact tracer can call them that evening. In these cases, the rapid test may give a **false sense of security**, as **they may be tested too soon** in the course of infection to detect the virus. **Students and staff in quarantine are NOT eligible for point of care COVID-19 tests** and may be inappropriately taking the testing opportunity of someone who needs the test to return to school. ECDOH is relying on us to communicate this to families and staff. ECDOH contact tracers will be able to advise families and individuals on when to get a diagnostic test, and what county sites are available for that test.

ECDOH sincerely wants to keep this service available, and to get kids and staff back to the school setting if possible. However, if we continue to field requests for appointments from people who are under quarantine, they may consider switching to a system where a referral from a school, school nurse or physician will be required. This would not be ideal, but they need to preserve their resources to identify new cases within school settings. Students and staff who are under quarantine are already excluded from schools.

None of us could have imagined being in a situation like this at this time last year. It has been a challenging two months for schools and all of us. Your efforts to follow our reopening plan are truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jon MacSwan
Superintendent of Schools