



CLEVELAND HILL

UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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December 10, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I want to provide an update on the progress of our testing plan required to return to in-person instruction. As you are aware, the Governor designated the Cleveland Hill community as part of an Orange Zone. Since November 23rd, we have been operating under our remote learning plan.

On November 30th, Governor Cuomo presented alternative testing criteria for schools to reopen for in-person instruction while under an Orange Zone designation. We have been working diligently on our testing procedures and protocols. We are committed to reopening with the same focus on student, faculty and staff safety, as we did in September.

With that, we have partnered with our medical director and have obtained the minimally-invasive BinaxNOW rapid tests. This consists of a nasal swab in the inside of the nostril that does not enter the nasal cavity. There are some important components to know about our testing protocol:

- The tests will be administered by the district Registered Nurses.
- We will have counseling staff present at the testing sites (one in the elementary school and two in the middle school/high school). Our goal is to make this a stress free experience for your child. There will be activities available for your child as they await testing. We expect children to be in the testing center for approximately 15 minutes.
- Testing will occur on Monday and Tuesday mornings.
- Parents will be notified the Friday prior that their child has been randomly selected for testing the following Monday or Tuesday based upon their hybrid attendance .
- If your child does not participate in testing, they will still be allowed to attend school.
- If your child tests positive, you will be contacted immediately to pick your child up. They will then receive remote instruction during their period of quarantine.

We are able to reopen due to the support that we have received from our community, students and staff. Under current guidance, we will need to randomly test a certain percentage of students, faculty and staff each week to continue in-person instruction. As such, the larger the pool of potential tests that can be administered, the stronger our ability is to continue within our hybrid instructional model. Please see the attached link for a video demonstration that we created of how the BinaxNow test will be administered: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUWaMKkqbPA>. With the number of consents that we have received, we do not anticipate that any student will need to be tested more than once in a four month period.

Though we have strong protocols here within the schools and our school community continues to follow all guidance at home, we do need to recognize the possibility of positive tests. In that instance, the testing site will be thoroughly sanitized prior to any further testing. As testing will occur prior to students attendance

during the school day, no additional exposure would occur. Though testing can generate concern for some, the testing we are implementing is a new and vital tool to stopping the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

We are getting this opportunity to reopen schools because schools have proven to be one of the safest places to be. We will continue to have the health, safety and welfare of the school community as our top priority, and the new testing protocols in place on further this effort. Please remember to take your child's temperature before school and follow the guidance on the health screening questionnaire. It is important that if your child is demonstrating any symptoms to not send them to school and contact your child's physician. We appreciate the support that the Cleveland Hill community continues to provide during these difficult times.

Sincerely,

David Evans
Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel
Cleveland Hill UFSD