



Akron Central School District

In Pursuit of Excellence

*Patrick D. McCabe
Superintendent of Schools*

January 14, 2022

Dear Akron Central School District Families:

I am pleased to share that the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) has determined that the Akron Central School District may implement “Test to Stay” (TTS) subject to the approval and compliance with the requirements of the ECDOH.

“Test to Stay” will be available for any of our students, teachers, and staff who are not fully vaccinated and have been identified as close contacts of a COVID-19 case at school. Parents have the choice to opt in to the “Test to Stay” program by completing the [Akron CSD COVID-19 TTS Parent Consent Form](#).

Under the “Test to Stay” program a medical professional from Aveanna Healthcare will conduct a rapid COVID-19 antigen test. If the test is negative, the student can attend school instead of an at-home quarantine. If the test is positive, the student would be excluded from school and be placed in isolation at home according to the Update Isolation & Quarantine Guidance issued on January 13, 2022

The District has advocated for the “Test to Stay” program for our students because we believe this strategy will maximize the opportunity for in-person learning, provide important social, nutritional, and mental health supports, and maintain routines for families.

Please read the [ECDOH COVID-19 “Test to Stay” Policy](#) and Frequently Asked Questions that accompany this letter for more detailed information.

As always, we thank you for your continued support as we look to increase the continuity of learning for our students who are identified as close contacts.

Sincerely,

Patrick D. McCabe

**Additional information on TTS protocols and ECDOH requirements
are explained in the following FAQ:**

Q. Who is eligible to participate in the TTS program?

*A. With test kits supplied by NYSDOH and ECDOH, the District will administer rapid antigen testing for unvaccinated students whose parents give consent to participate in the TTS program. The TTS program is only for **asymptomatic** students, teachers, and staff who have had close contact with a positive case. If an individual becomes symptomatic during the TTS, even with a negative antigen test, they are no longer eligible for TTS and must isolate at home.*

Fully vaccinated students, teachers, and staff, and those who have been infected with COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test) who are identified as close contacts can continue to attend school and therefore, do not need to participate in the TTS program.

Q. How do I grant permission for my child to participate in the TTS program?

A. Parents who would like to have their child participate in the TTS program are required to complete [the Akron CSD COVID-19 TTS Parent Consent form](#). Parents may choose to complete this form prior to their child being identified as a close contact.

Q. Can my child participate in the TTS program if their exposure occurred outside of school?

A. No. ECDOH policy states that the exposure must have occurred in the school setting and while both the person that tested positive for COVID-19 and the exposed person were consistently and properly masked.

Q. What if I choose not to have my child participate in the TTS program?

A. Individuals who are unvaccinated and choose not to participate in the TTS program will be required to quarantine after exposure in accordance with the requirements by NYSDOH & ECDOH.

Q. Is there a fee to participate in the TTS program?

A. No. There is no fee for a student to participate in the TTS program.

Q. When will the daily rapid antigen test be administered?

A. The rapid antigen test must be conducted before the school day begins. ECDOH requires that the test to stay be administered by a licensed medical provider, and the test cannot be administered at home. The rapid antigen test must be administered a minimum of two times during the five-day period following exposure, unless recognition of the exposure is delayed or weekends or school breaks intervene. One of the tests must occur on day five. If day five falls on a weekend or school holiday, the test should be performed the next school day.

Q. How and where will the testing be conducted at school?

A. Upon arrival at school, the student, teachers, and staff will report directly to the designated testing site for the rapid antigen test. The test used is a minimally invasive shallow nasal swab in each nostril that takes a few seconds.

If the result is negative, the individual will continue with their regular school day. If the test is positive, the student will be isolated from peers, and the parent/guardian will be notified to pick their child up at school. Individuals will then be required to isolate as required by NYSDOH & ECDOH.

Q. Can my child ride the bus when participating in the TTS program?

A. Students in the TTS program are permitted to ride the bus. However, ECDOH strongly recommends that parents/guardians provide personal transportation for students in TTS.

Q. What if my child is identified as being exposed to COVID-19 and is notified days after the exposure date? Can they still participate in the TTS program?

A. Testing will be adjusted accordingly and students will need to test for the remaining days of quarantine in order to continue to attend in-person school.

Q. What if my child was COVID-positive in the last 90 days?

A. A student who has received a lab-confirmed COVID-19 test result in the past 90 days is not required to quarantine or participate in TTS testing.

Q. What if my child develops symptoms while participating in the TTS program?

A. If the student who is allowed to remain in school through the TTS program develops COVID-19 symptoms, they must be isolated at home per current ECDOH guidance. The student will also need a molecular test from a testing facility and will need to remain home until a negative result is received, the student is fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication, and any other symptoms are improving.

Q. Does the TTS program allow my child to participate in activities outside the school day?

A. Extracurricular or after school activities: Individuals 12 years and older who are eligible for a booster but not boosted, and who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19, cannot participate in extracurricular or after school activities and, aside from school attendance for instruction and bus travel, must adhere to a 5-day quarantine at home. Fully vaccinated 5-11-year-old children are not eligible for a booster and have no further restrictions.

Q. Is daily testing required on weekends and holidays?

*A. Testing as part of the TTS program is **only** required on days when school is in session. Tests will not be administered on weekends or holidays.*

Q. What happens after my child tests negative throughout the TTS period?

A. Testing is no longer required through the TTS program for this exposure.

Q. Can my child get a negative COVID-19 test to be released from quarantine?

*A. ECDOH does **NOT** permit individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 to test out of quarantine. The TTS program is the only option that ECDOH has approved to permit unvaccinated, asymptomatic students to remain in school following a COVID-19 exposure.*

Q. Are there any additional responsibilities for the school district?

A. Schools implementing “Test to Stay” must adhere to the following:

- *While ECDOH and NYSDOH will be supplying the tests to be used for TTS, it is the responsibility of participating schools to arrange for test pickup*
- *Obtain and store parental consent for TTS participation for the duration of the program*
- *Supply and meet requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE) and biohazard waste removal procedures*
- *Ensure that those conducting the TTS tests are properly trained*
- *Maintain a Limited Service Laboratory (LSL) and a medical director*
- *Report test results daily to ECLRS and NYSDOH Report Card*
- *Report all positive test results daily to ECDOH*
- *Report daily to ECDOH using the designated TTS spreadsheet*
- *Provide ECDOH with a timely list of all close contacts of positive cases i.e., 1-2 days after school's case is identified.*
- *Keep updated contact information with ECDOH at all times, which will include one main contact and one backup contact per school district or private/charter school.*