



January 21, 2022

Dear ACS Families and Staff:

First, I would like to address the numerous updates/communications regarding COVID-19 protocols in schools. As you have seen, changes occur daily and, sometimes hourly, often contradicting prior guidance. This causes major confusion for our staff and our families. I have tried to minimize these updates from NYSDOH and ECDOH to those that only focus on safety and opportunities that allow our students to have greater access to their education/programs within our schools.

Yesterday, I received information that significantly altered the current practice of “contact tracing” which provides for greater local control. We have, and will always, keep student safety at the forefront, but recognize the importance of keeping students in school. We will begin to implement a VOLUNTARY testing program for any students and staff who have been in close proximity of a known positive case of COVID-19.

Effective the morning of **Monday, January 24, 2022**, people exposed in a school or community setting are now eligible to participate in the Test to Stay (TTS) program. Previously, only those who were exposed within the school setting were eligible. Household close contacts are still **NOT** eligible (e.g., a student’s parent/guardian/sibling with whom they live tests positive).

The process for TTS will be as follows:

- Student/staff member is identified as a potential COVID-19 contact in school setting or community. If student is identified as a community close contact, call the school nurse immediately. Staff member should contact their direct supervisor.
- Parents/staff will have the **option** to participate in the TTS Program. Interested parents/staff must complete the attached TTS Consent Form, also available on the website or by clicking [here](#).
- Parents/students/staff conduct daily health screening at home; if asymptomatic, report to school.
- Once in the building, report directly to the designated TTS location.
- Alden CSD will conduct testing. Negative results allow student/staff member to report to class/work. If the student tests positive, the parent will be notified and the student will need to isolate until the parent picks the student up.

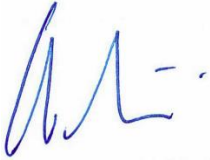
Effective **Wednesday, January 26, 2022**, for families that are interested, the District will begin voluntary diagnostic testing through the same process as our TTS program for both vaccinated and unvaccinated students and staff. Symptomatic K-12 students/staff may receive a test daily at the High School from 6:00 – 7:00 a.m. Please complete the consent form and enter at the front of the High School. Parents must escort their child to the testing site. While symptomatic students/staff may receive a negative test, they should not be in attendance if they are sick (fever, nausea, diarrhea, cough, etc.).

Unfortunately, at this time the TTS Program will **NOT** allow students to participate in extra-curricular activities, nor does it take the place of the weekly testing requirement for staff members to be eligible to report to work. Superintendents across the region and State are advocating for a change in both of these practices, along with exit strategies for many of the other restrictions that are currently in place. My hope is that this recent “local control” is a sign of what the future may hold.

For your convenience, I have included below a list of “Frequently Asked Questions.” If you are in need of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact your child(ren)’s building principal.

Thank you for your patience as we continue to adjust our procedures with the most up to date information.

Sincerely,



Adam Stoltman  
Superintendent of Schools

*Frequently Asked Questions –*

1. Is my child eligible for TTS if they are identified as a close contact because they live with someone that tests positive for COVID-19?

No.

2. Can my child attend the daily TTS Program if they have flu-like symptoms?

No; however, you may choose to have your child tested to rule out COVID-19 at the 6-7 a.m. clinic at the High School.

3. Is my child eligible for TTS if they had a sleep over at a household with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

Yes, as long as they remain asymptomatic.

4. My child participates in non-school activities (dance, hockey, club soccer, gymnastics, etc.). If one of their “teammates” tests positive for COVID-19, may they participate in TTS?

Yes, as long as they remain asymptomatic.

5. Is my asymptomatic child eligible to return to school if they have been in close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

Yes, if they are vaccinated.

Yes, if they are unvaccinated and test negative through our TTS Program.

Yes, if they are unvaccinated and have had a lab confirmed positive COVID-19 test result within 90 days.