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Community Corner

Auchincloss commends the "Medfield Model" of Pool Testing

Congressman Jake Auchincloss Tours Medfield High School COVID-19 [Pool] Testing Operation with Ginkgo Bioworks Staff.



Colleen M. Sullivan, Patch Mayor

Posted Thu, Apr 8, 2021 at 11:00 pm ET | Updated Thu, Apr 8, 2021 at 11:03 pm ET

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Congressman Jake Auchincloss at Medfield High School (Photo by Colleen Sullivan)



Provided by the Office of Congressman Jake Auchincloss.

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Dignitaries Visit Medfield Pool Covid Testing at MHS...

Today, April 8, 2021, Congressman Jake Auchincloss (D, MA-04) and Ginkgo Bioworks staff toured the Medfield High School COVID-19 testing operation. Auchincloss visited the school as part of his American Rescue Plan tour, highlighting the success of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and the economic recovery taking place. Each stop in the district has focused on at least one of the three main goals of the ARP: shots in arms, kids back to school, and Americans back to work.

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"Medfield is a model for Massachusetts and for the nation," **said Congressman Auchincloss.**

"By following the best and latest public health guidance, by leveraging the best in science - in partnership with companies like Ginkgo Bioworks, - and by building close-knit collaboration built on confidence and transparency between students, parents, nurses, faculty, and administrators, they have been able to achieve testing rates that have allowed them to get back to full time in-person learning ahead of the curve. The Medfield model is going to be an inspiration to The Commonwealth and to the whole country. The American Rescue Plan funds are going to allow the Medfield model to scale up so that we can get kids back to full time in-person learning, which we know is critically important not just for their academic development, but also just as important for their mental health."

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In February, it was **announced** that **Ginkgo Bioworks**, the organism company, would collaborate with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to offer SARS-CoV-2 pooled testing services to approved public K-12 schools and approved special education schools in Massachusetts. The goal of **Concentric by Ginkgo, Ginkgo Bioworks's public health and biosecurity effort**, is to provide easy, affordable pooled testing to every school in America. Phase one of the Massachusetts initiative has focused on providing state-sponsored weekly pooled testing to students, teachers, and staff. This program is available to approved public schools and approved special education schools offering in-person or hybrid learning, as well as remote schools looking to return to in-person learning.

"After a long year, it's so powerful to see this incredible program in action," **said Matt McKnight, Chief Commercial Officer at Ginkgo Bioworks.** "It's a perfect example of what happens when good science and good governance come together. Today, our neighbors in Medfield - whose students, parents, teachers, staff, and community members banded around implementing this program - can renew their confidence in their in-person learning

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across America, and shows all the good public-private partnership can bring to communities as we rebuild from this biological crisis. Every school in the country can now bring on programs like Concentric which give them access to the capacity, the know-how, and the materials to test every student, every week."

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