



SOUTH SENECA

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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January 1, 2022

As mentioned in yesterday's communication, Seneca County Health Department has now approved and developed a Test-To-Stay program for county school districts, which could allow students in quarantine to continue to attend their school days if they continue to test negative. It's important for everyone to understand how this program will work at the outset.

First, eligibility for Test-To-Stay (TTS) in Seneca County is relatively narrow: it is limited to those quarantined as a result of close contact at school while both the contact and the infectious individual were properly wearing masks. The term "at school" includes all school programs where students are being supervised (see the following page for a full description). ***Settings where masks are not worn (cafeterias while eating, for example) are not covered by TTS, and neither are close contacts identified through exposure outside of school or in the household.***

The testing requirement for school attendance is accomplished in our buildings, supervised by school staff, but actually conducted by the student's guardian (or designated adult), or potentially by the students themselves if old enough. They receive their own transportation to school, conduct the COVID test, and if negative, they can attend school that day. They would not be eligible under this program to participate in after school activities, and must return to quarantine after school dismissal. As long as they test negative in the morning, they are permitted to ride school transportation home that day.

Because the TTS program is administered with over-the-counter tests, it falls outside the scope of the school district's limited lab license, and is not part of the school nurse office's operations (although school nurses might sometimes serve as staff to supervise). Building principals are ultimately charged with student access to school days, so initial questions about TTS should be directed to principals. They can help with the logistics, and can also direct any follow-up questions to the proper channels.

Please see the following page for particular details of the county's plan developed for South Seneca.

Requirements for TTS

- [NYS requirement] Exposure must have occurred in the school setting* and while both the person with COVID-19 and exposed person were consistently and properly masked
 - Students defined as close contact (less than 3 feet from an infected student) if they were masked
 - Staff defined as close contact (less than 6 feet from an infected student/staff) if they were masked
 - Does not include exposures when masks are not worn such as during lunch
 - Does not include exposures outside of the “school setting”

****Seneca County defines “school setting” as any location where school staff are supervising. This includes exposure during extracurricular activities as long as the individuals are “consistently and properly masked.”***

- Daily test will be conducted, and the results received, before the school day begins.
- Testing will be conducted by the individual or parent/guardian (or other adult as designated by the parent/guardian) according to manufacturer’s instructions. No school staff or other individuals at the testing location will conduct the test. **Note: any reference in this document to “parent/guardian” includes a designated adult as appointed by the parent/guardian.**
- Positive individuals will be excluded/isolated per existing protocol.
- No consent form is needed because the test is over-the-counter (OTC) and self-administered.
- Testing will be monitored on school days only. No test will be required on weekends, holidays, or snow days.
- Symptomatic individuals will not be allowed to enter the testing site.
- If at any time the individual becomes symptomatic, they will be referred to their primary care physician (PCP) according to current protocol.
- Individuals in the TTS program are only allowed out of quarantine for classes. They are not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities, cannot be transported to school by bus, and must return home at the end of the day and be in quarantine. *They will be allowed to be transported home by bus at the end of the day.*
- Individuals must test negative on all school days within a seven (7) day period in order to continue attending school and to end quarantine in less than 10 days.

If the 7th day of testing falls on a weekend/holiday/snow day, the individual must also test negative on the next day of school in order to return to school and end their quarantine, unless day 10 of quarantine comes first and released by the SCHD.