Dear Families of Frankfort CUSD #168:

We continue to see the benefits of learning in-person to give our students the best chance to be successful. To continue our focus on academics – our primary responsibility as a public school district – and keep students and staff in the classroom, we will be adding one more tool that is available to us. To help students who are a close contact with a COVID-positive student at school or a school event and are showing no symptoms, we will begin to offer a VOLUNTARY “Test-to-Stay” program. If you are interested in having your student participate in this voluntary program for those who may be identified as a close contact, please continue reading for this “opt-in” program.

Our “Test-to-Stay” protocols will be in line with guidance from the Centers for Disease control (CDC), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Up until now, if a student is confirmed as a close contact with a COVID-positive person, they would be excluded from school to quarantine. This would mean they would miss a period of time of in-person learning while they waited to see if symptoms would develop.

With the change to a Test-to-Stay protocol, if a student is confirmed as a close contact with a COVID-positive person at school or at a school-sponsored event or trip, students and staff will have the option to be tested at school with a rapid antigen test (in our case, BinaxNOW test) on days one, three, five, and seven from the date of exposure. Students and staff then may stay at school and in class as long as they do not show symptoms, follow proper face covering protocols, and continue to test negative. On a side note, this covers attending class in our more controlled settings. This does not apply to students participating in extra-curricular activities including sports. In those cases, the students would follow regular exclusion for quarantine timelines.

To voluntarily participate in the “Test-to-Stay” program, a student’s parent or guardian will need to either call the school to request or download a copy of the proper testing paperwork from our website at www.wfschools.org, complete it, and return it to your school’s nursing staff so that we have it on file. Testing must be conducted at school by school staff and will mostly occur at the start of the school day before entering the classroom. If the close contact is identified five days or more from the date of exposure, testing schedules will be adjusted accordingly. When the sequence of testing is not possible due to weekends and holidays, students and staff will be tested at the earliest possible opportunity upon their return.

If you have more detailed questions, please contact your student’s school and ask to speak to the nurse. If you are interested in opting in to this “Test-to-Stay” program, please have your student’s paperwork submitted to the District’s nursing staff as soon as you can. Thank you for your efforts in helping to preserve in-person learning for all of our students.

Sincerely,

Matt Donkin
Superintendent of Schools