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Tonawanda City School District

TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT TEST TO STAY PROTOCOLS 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

Designated COVID-19 Safety Coordinator: Mary Beth Scullion

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** These protocols were developed in consultation with many school and community stakeholders. All areas of this plan address requirements and mandates as defined in the guidance documents from New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH). Additionally, this plan includes other recommendations and best practices as described in the guidance. This plan is subject to change based on future guidance and recommendations established by the NYSDOH and ECDOH.*



This document includes the written protocols required by the ECDOH under New York Public Health Law and related regulations, and in connection with the New York State Department of Health. ECDOH has determined that schools in Erie County may implement “Test to Stay” (TTS), subject to the approval of ECDOH and compliance with the requirements set forth below. Tonawanda City Schools is therefore establishing the following requirements for the implementation of TTS in our school district. The health and safety of district students and staff is our top priority, this plan has a strong commitment to those measures.

Definition: In Erie County, **Test to Stay** is defined as follows: P-12 students/staff who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and who are identified as close contacts due to COVID-19 exposure while in a school or community setting may attend in person classes (instruction/academic periods), even while under mandatory quarantine orders, if:

- (1) the student/staff member is symptom free,
- (2) the school has received consent for the student to undergo testing,
- (3) the student/staff member is tested 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.

Test to Stay is available only to Erie County P-12 students and staff.

In the classroom school setting, a close contact is someone who is less than 3 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period. In non-classroom school settings and/or any setting where masks are not consistently properly worn (e.g., lunch room, bus), a close contact is someone less than 6 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

Fully vaccinated students/staff and students/staff who have been infected with COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test) who are identified as close contacts do not need to quarantine. Fully vaccinated is defined as people who are ages 5–17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines, and people who are ages 18 and older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people.

Tonawanda City Schools written procedure that adopts the following TTS protocols:

- The exposure must have occurred in a school or community setting and while both the person with COVID-19 (index patient) and exposed person were consistently and properly masked. Please note, household exposures do not qualify for TTS.
- The exposed person remains asymptomatic; if the exposed person who is allowed to remain in school through TTS develops symptoms, they must be immediately excluded from school per current school guidance. In addition to a negative nucleic acid amplification (NAAT) test or antigen test, symptomatic individuals must be well enough to participate in school, not have runny nose or cough severe enough to make mask wearing difficult or unhygienic, be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medication, and meet other school or district requirements to return to school after a non-COVID illness.
- The exposed person is tested 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.

- The five-day period is measured in calendar days where the last date of exposure is considered day 0. The first test should be done as soon as possible after exposure is identified (i.e., the first day the student is in school after identified exposure).
- The test must be conducted—and the results received—before the school day begins, and positive individuals be excluded/isolated per existing procedures.
- ECDOH requires that TTS testing be conducted on school grounds, and not elsewhere. Home testing is not permitted for TTS.
- Testing will take place at the designated location that is communicated to families by the COVID Coordinator once the consent has been received.
- The exposed person who is allowed to remain in school through TTS must be quarantined outside of school instruction/academic periods (on weekends/holidays when the five-day TTS period is still active, but no school test is required; no after school/evenings; no community activities or extracurricular participation including clubs, sports, arts/performance activities, etc.).
- Students participating in TTS are allowed to continue to ride the school bus following all existing guidance, including required masking. However, ECDOH strongly recommends that parents/guardians provide personal transportation for students in TTS.
- Follow-up procedures will be followed up by the COVID Coordinator and families in the event an individual tests COVID-19 positive.

Tonawanda City Schools will 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 administering the test.
- 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 a designated TTS spreadsheet.
- Provide ECDOH with a timely list of all close contacts of positive cases i.e., 1-2 days after school 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.

**ECDOH may adjust TTS policy at any time and will communicate any changes to districts as they are received. TCSD will communicate with families.*