



December 28, 2021

Dear Somerset and Somerset Berkley Families,

Thank you for your continued support as we kick off the 2022 calendar year. At Somerset and Somerset Berkley Regional School Districts, keeping your students safe and in school is our top priority. We have learned a great deal over this past year and our current guidance and procedures reflect the most updated recommendations from the CDC and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Beginning in early January 2022, we are offering an extra layer of protection to prevent the spread of COVID-19, our COVID-19 testing program at school. This program will have two different components. The first is called **test and stay** for students who may have been exposed while in school but are not showing symptoms. The second component will begin after the test and stay program has been established. This second component involves **symptomatic testing** for students who show symptoms of COVID-19 at school. Each of these is a quick, non-invasive nasal swab that is collected under the supervision of a trained health provider using the BinaxNOW rapid antigen test. Unlike COVID-19 tests of the past, these are not uncomfortable and easy for students to do themselves.

Students only participate with permission from a parent or guardian. It is important to the Somerset and Somerset Berkley Regional School Districts that families are fully informed regarding the process. Below we describe each part of our testing program, how they are conducted, and what they are used for.

Symptomatic testing is used when a student is showing symptoms of COVID-19 during school; students should not come to school if they are feeling sick while at home. Some symptoms of the virus look identical to other illnesses like the cold or flu, and this test tells us whether a symptomatic student has COVID-19 or not. This is a rapid test and we receive the results of this test within 15 minutes. If a student has minimal symptoms and tests negative, they can remain in school.

Test and stay allows students who have had close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19 while at school to stay in school if the student is not showing symptoms. Instead of needing to quarantine and miss school, these students will take a daily rapid test while they

Jeffrey Schoonover, Superintendent | 580 Whetstone Hill Road, Somerset, MA 02726 |
508.324.3100 | www.somersetschools.org

SOMERSET BERKLEY
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



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remain in school as long as they are not symptomatic. Students participate in test and stay for at least five days after they may have been exposed.

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they must isolate at home for the CDC-recommended period of time. The student must also be without a fever for 24 hours.

To participate in the program, you must submit a consent form through this link: <https://www.cic-health.com/consent/ma> on behalf of your student. For students of Somerset Berkley Regional High School, select "Somerset" from the drop-down menu under Step 1 then select "Somerset Berkley Regional High School" in Step 2. There is no charge for participating in this program.

The test and stay component is expected to begin shortly after our return from break in early January. More details will be shared about the testing procedures for students and where testing will take place when we have this information. In the meantime, parents and guardians wishing for students to participate in either the test and stay or symptomatic testing may complete the online consent form. Families not wishing for their children to participate in either testing component will continue following all isolation protocols that have been followed in Somerset and Somerset Berkley to date.

It is our hope that these measures will work together to keep our schools safe and your student in school. Thanks again for your support during this challenging time. We look forward to a happy, healthy, and successful 2022.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Schoonover

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