



Surry County Public Schools

ViSSTA COVID-19 Testing Program

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Surry County Public Schools (SCPS) is taking many steps to keep our school safe. Steps we are taking include:

- Promoting Vaccination
- Consistent and Correct Use of Masks
- Physical Distancing
- Ventilation
- Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities
- Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine

In addition to these practices, starting **January 26, 2022**, we will be implementing a COVID-19 screening testing pilot program. Screening testing involves testing a group of asymptomatic individuals on a regular basis. Our goal is to proactively identify infected people who may be contagious as early as possible so we can take steps to keep the virus from spreading. In many people, COVID-19 has no symptoms and people may not realize they are infected; however, these people are contagious for a period during their illness.

Screening testing is most successful when a large portion of the community participates (both students and staff), so we are asking you to strongly consider having your child participate in this pilot program. A small sample of school community members will be randomly selected every week for testing. **Participation is voluntary.** Only those who sign and return the consent form will be tested as part of this pilot program.

Attached is the consent form, which will allow our vendor, LTS, to test your child. Some frequently asked questions (with answers) are below. If you have additional questions, please contact the nurse at your child's school.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Who may participate in the screening testing program?

Only students and staff members with approved consent forms on file should be included in the program. Parents/legal guardians are not included.

2. What is the added value of screening testing in K-12 school?

The goal of screening testing is to proactively identify infected people who may be contagious as early as possible so measures can be taken to keep the virus from spreading. Many people with COVID-19 don't have symptoms and may not realize they are infected; however, these people can still infect others. It is estimated that asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic individuals account for more than 50% of transmission.



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- 3. How frequently does screening testing need to be conducted?**
To maximize effectiveness, screening testing should be conducted at least weekly over several weeks.
- 4. Does a school have to report screening testing results to the health department?**
Yes, schools must report all positive tests results individually and all negatives to VDH.
- 5. What happens if a person has a positive test while conducting screening testing?**
If an asymptomatic individual receives a positive test result, they should isolate. Our schools will follow testing protocols and coordinate with our local health department.
- 6. Can Schools require student and staff members to participate in the pilot program?**
No, screening testing must be voluntary. Schools must have a consent form for all individuals who will be tested.
- 7. Should screening testing programs include individuals who are fully vaccinated?**
Yes, vaccine coverage is not 100% so vaccinated individuals should continue to physically distance, wear a mask, and get tested in certain situations. This is an area of emerging science and guidance may change in the future.