

School Messenger email Friday, July 29, 2021

Subject line: Testing, Tracing and Vaccination—Keys to Keeping Schools Open

**Office of the Superintendent**

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff:

I want to extend a “thank you” to our staff members and students who have participated in voluntary COVID-19 testing. Testing and tracing is a critical component in limiting the spread of the novel coronavirus. As you may know, CVESD has offered free COVID-19 testing for students and staff members since Monday, July 19 at the Education Service and Support Center, located at 84 East J Street, Chula Vista. Our District has allocated nearly \$2 million to date for COVID-19 testing. Since the start of this school year, we have operated one of the largest testing centers in San Diego County.

To better deploy our resources, the schedule for a two-week cycle of voluntary testing at each school will need to be adjusted. This will enable us to concentrate school-based testing at sites that have had a positive COVID-19 case(s)—helping us ensure that cases remain isolated.

Yesterday, District leaders participated in an [online webinar hosted by the California Department of Education](#). One of the featured speakers was Dr. Naomi Bardach, the “Safe Schools for All” team lead. Dr. Bardach shared that most children contract the disease from a close relative, not from fellow students or school personnel. However, there are things that adults can do to reduce the spread of the virus among children. “Vaccines for adults are key to prevention in kids,” she said.

Indeed, in CVESD, the number of positive cases involving students and staff represents a small fraction of our enrollment. Most of these cases involve community spread—meaning the adult or student was in close contact or had a positive test result from someone at home being sick. A list of schools that have had a positive COVID-19 case(s) will be posted on our District website weekly, just as we did throughout the previous school year. As of this writing, **masks are still required when indoors** in K-12 schools, according to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). While students are present in the room, masking indoors is required for everyone—including for vaccinated individuals. When students are not present, fully vaccinated people are not required to mask indoors, according to CDPH. **Students are able to remove their masks outdoors**. Masking, testing, vaccination—these are among the multi-layered strategies in place in schools to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If you are eligible to receive the vaccine, please do so. In San Diego County, 93.3% of COVID-19 cases reported involved unvaccinated individuals. Our District will continue to provide COVID-19 testing opportunities for students and staff, regardless of vaccination status. Please keep in mind the following:

- If your child is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and/or gets sent home, we cannot accept the Antigen test for their return to campus. PCR/NAAT tests are needed for anyone who is symptomatic—or who is asymptomatic (doesn’t have symptoms) yet tested positive with an Antigen test.
- We highly recommend getting a PCR/NAAT test at a [free County facility](#), at a medical provider, or at our District Office (Educational Services and Support Center) located at 84

East J Street, Chula Vista. The district office site hours are from M-TH 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. and on Fridays from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

- Currently, **we can only test STAFF and CVESD STUDENTS**. No family members are able to test, at this time.

An email will be sent to you directly with instructions on how to sign up for COVID-19 testing.

Thank you for your assistance in COVID-19 prevention.