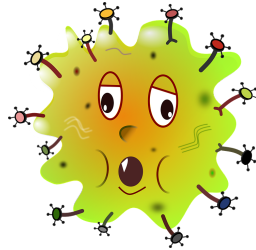


# November Newsletter

from: The School Nurse

Estancia Municipal School

November 2021



## COVID TESTING UPDATE

Dear Parents, Caregivers, and Guardians,

We know quarantining and moving to distance learning is tough, so we want to take whatever steps necessary to help keep students in school and families safe. As part of the steps to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and keep our school open for in-person learning, we will participate in the TEST TO STAY PROGRAM, which is a free COVID-19 Testing Program for students and staff at Estancia Municipal Schools. Regular testing will help protect our students, staff, family members, and others who are not vaccinated against COVID-19 or are otherwise at risk for getting seriously sick from COVID-19. Once identified, we will test close contacts on days 1, 3, and 5. The good news is, if a student or staff member tests negative, they are able to continue coming to school instead of quarantining!! If they test positive, they will begin a 10 day quarantine. The Test to Stay program is for close contacts in the school setting only. We are not allowed to offer the Test to Stay option for close contact exposure outside of the school setting.

Through this program, we will be able to identify COVID-19 cases quickly and early, which can help us stop an outbreak before it happens. This will also help us keep students in the classroom where they are able to take part in the school activities they love.

Test to Stay Details:

- Who will be tested? We will offer testing to everyone identified as a close contact as a result of a school case - all students and staff—even if they don't have symptoms of COVID-19.
- How is the testing done? The COVID-19 testing is free, quick, and easy. The school nurse will oversee testing with BinaxNOW rapid tests, which includes:
  - Gently swabbing the inner part of the lower nostril. This test is not painful. We do not use the longer swabs that reach higher into the nose.



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- How can I be sure that my child's information will be protected? Sharing of information about your child will only be done for public health purposes and in accordance with applicable law and policies protecting student privacy and the security of your child's data.

In addition to the Test to Stay program, testing is also available for students and staff who have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), even if vaccinated, or who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 away from the school campus.

Our school's testing site will be in the nurse's office at the lower elementary and will take place daily. Results are available within 15 minutes. AN APPOINTMENT MUST BE MADE TO BE TESTED. This is important as we must take precautions to limit exposure to the virus between those being tested.

The purpose of this letter is to notify you:

- We would like to test your child when identified as a close contact in the school setting as part of a free COVID-19 testing program at school, and
- Test your child if they show symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while in school.
- YOU WILL **ALWAYS** BE NOTIFIED IF YOUR CHILD IS A CLOSE CONTACT OR SYMPTOMATIC BEFORE BEING TESTED.
- If your child is sick it is EXTREMELY important that you keep them home from school. To minimize the risk of spreading any illness students need to stay home from school until symptoms are improving.

We are extremely grateful to our committed families and staff who continue to show great flexibility and resilience as we work together to contain the spread of this virus. If you have questions regarding the COVID-19 Testing Program, please reach out to Chariti Sanchez RN at 505-384-2071.

Sincerely,

Chariti Sanchez RN, MSN-Ed

Estancia School Nurse

*CDC recommends everyone 5 years old and older get a COVID-19 vaccine to help protect against COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective, and free. Getting vaccinated prevents severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find more information about vaccines; also, the NM DOH hosts vaccine clinics on a regular basis. They can be reached at 505-222-6530 to find a clinic near you. If you have any questions or would like more information, you can reach the school nurse at 505-384-2071.*

