

Dear BPS Families,

Thank you for your continued partnership during this unprecedented school year. In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Boston Public Schools has been working closely with the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to implement a free COVID-19 pooled testing program for students and staff in our schools.

We are sending you this letter to ask your permission to regularly test your child as part of a pooled testing program at their school. Pooled testing involves reviewing several individuals' test samples together into one "pool" and then testing the pooled sample for COVID-19. This approach increases the number of individuals that can be tested at one time and allows us to regularly test our school community for COVID-19.

The pooled tests will be performed at least once per week with a shallow nasal swab for all participating students. Schools will receive the pool results within 24-48 hours. If the result of the pool is negative, then all individuals are presumed to not have COVID-19. If the result of the pool is positive, then all individuals in the pool must be retested individually. Because pooled testing does not give individual results, you will only be notified if your child requires follow-up testing.

Testing is free, confidential, and voluntary. We encourage you to consider allowing your child to participate.

School staff have been thoroughly trained on how to administer tests. Your child's school will call you if your child is part of a positive pool and requires follow-up testing and any other suggested actions. If your student tests positive from a follow-up test, you will need to pick up your student from school and follow the quarantine procedures. Your school will communicate the next steps to you in the chance that your student's pool is positive and the individual follow-up test is positive.

To give permission for your student to participate in the COVID-19 Pooled Testing Program at our school, including consent to transmit student information via the pooled testing technology platform, consent for any necessary follow up tests, and consent to share the test result information with the Department of Public Health and CIC Health (a third party organization contracted to compile consent for testing and to share test results), please complete the electronic consent form [here](#). Complete one form per student who you have attending in-person learning.

Please contact your child's school with any questions.

Thank you,

Superintendent Brenda Cassellius