

**Cheektowaga Central School District**



**TEST TO STAY  
PROGRAM**

**1/19/2022**

*This document includes the written protocols required by the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) under New York Public Health Law and related regulations, and in connection with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). ECDOH has determined that schools in Erie County may implement “Test to Stay” (TTS) subject to the approval of the ECDOH and compliance with the requirements set forth below. The Cheektowaga Central School District (CCSD) is therefore establishing the following requirements for the implementation of TTS in our school district. The health and safety of district students and staff is our top priority, this plan has a strong commitment to those measures.*

Definition: In Erie County, TEST TO STAY (TTS) is defined as follows: P-12 students who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and who are identified as close contacts due to COVID-19 exposure while in a school setting may attend in person classes (instruction/academic periods), even while under mandatory isolation orders, if:

- The student is symptom free,
- The school has received parental consent for the student to undergo testing,
- The student is tested a minimum of 2 times during the five-day period following exposure, unless recognition of the exposure is delayed or weekends or school breaks intervene. One of the tests must occur on day five.

Test to Stay (TTS) is available only to Erie County P-12 students, not school staff at this time.

In the classroom school setting, a close contact is someone who is less than 3 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period. In non-classroom school settings and or any setting where masks are not consistently, properly worn (ie. lunch room, bus) a close contact is someone less than 6 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes over a 24 hour period.

Fully vaccinated students and students who have been infected with COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test) who are identified as close contacts do NOT need to be isolated. Fully vaccinated is defined as people who are ages 5-17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines, and people who are ages 18 and older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people.

**Cheektowaga Central School District Written Procedure That Adopts The Following TTS Protocols:**

- The exposure must have occurred within the school setting and while both the person with COVID-19 (index patient) and exposed person were consistently and properly masked.
- The exposed person remains Asymptomatic (no symptoms); if the exposed person who is allowed to remain in school through TTS develops symptoms, they must be immediately excluded from school per current school guidance. In addition to a negative nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) or antigen test, symptomatic individuals must be well enough to participate in school, not have a runny nose or cough severe enough to make mask wearing difficult or unhygienic, be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medication, and meet other school or district requirements to return to school after a non-COVID-19 illness.
- The exposed person is tested a minimum of 2 times during the 5 day period following exposure, unless recognition of the exposure is delayed or weekends or school breaks intervene. One of the tests must occur on day five. If day five falls on a weekend or school holiday, the test should be performed the next school day.

- The 5 day period is measured in calendar days where the last date of exposure is considered day 0. The first test should be done as soon as possible after exposure is identified (ie. the first day the student is in school after identified exposure).
- The test must be conducted and the results received BEFORE the school day begins and positive individuals must be excluded/isolated per existing procedures.
- ECDOH requires that TTS testing be conducted on school grounds and not elsewhere. Home testing is NOT permitted for the purposes of TEST TO STAY (TTS).
- Testing will take place at the designated location (High School Hallway at the back of the auditorium, entering door #5) that is communicated to families by each Building Principal. Testing will ONLY OCCUR IF PARENTAL CONSENT HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY THE DISTRICT.
- The exposed person who is allowed to remain in school through TTS must be quarantined outside of school instruction/academic periods (on weekends/holidays when the 5 day TTS period is still active, but no school test is required, no after school/evenings; no community activities or extracurricular participation including clubs, sports, arts/performance activities, etc.).
- Students participating in TTS are allowed to continue to ride the school bus following all existing guidance, including required masking. However, ECDOH strongly recommends that parents/guardians provide personal transportation for students in TTS.
- Follow-up procedures will be followed up by the TTS team at the time of testing (informing the family of a positive result, isolation requirements, etc.). Building nurses will also complete follow up and the TTS will comply with all required reporting to the ECDOH and the NYSDOH.

**Cheektowaga Central School District Will Adhere To The Following:**

- While ECDOH and the NYSDOH will be supplying the tests to be used for TTS, it is the responsibility of the participating schools (in this case CCSD) to arrange for administering the test. The CCSD nursing team will oversee/facilitate the testing process between the hours of 6:30 AM and 8:30 AM Monday through Friday for those whose parental consent has been received and have been identified as close contacts.
- Obtain and store parental consent for TTS participation for the duration of the program. (Form is located on the district website, electronic version and a hard copy version will also be made available for families during the testing period).
- Supply and meet requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE) and biohazard waste removal procedures which are managed via the buildings and grounds/facilities department.
- Ensure that those conducting the TTS tests are properly trained.
- Maintain a Limited Service Laboratory (LSL) and a medical director. The CCSD has a current license as an LSL through November of 2022 and the district Medical Director is: Dr. Peter Kowalski.
- Report test results daily to Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting System (ECLRS) and NYSDOH Report Card.
- Report all positive test results daily to ECDOH.
- Report daily to ECDOH using a designated TTS spreadsheet.
- Provide ECDOH with a timely list of all close contacts of positive cases (ie. 1-2 days after school case is identified).
- Keep updated contact information with ECDOH at all times, which will include one main contact and one backup contact per school district.

*Note: The aforementioned guidance is subject to change at any point via the ECDOH, the NYSDOH or the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Alden, etc. Changes will be implemented and shared with families by the CCSD.*

January 14, 2022

Dear Cheektowaga Central School District Families,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the new TEST TO STAY program that the Cheektowaga Central School District (CCSD) will be starting on Wednesday, January 19, 2022. This program has been authorized by the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) as a strategy that limits student isolations and is already in place in many areas across the county and state. This program has been implemented to help decrease the number of students placed in a mandatory quarantine when determined to be an unvaccinated, close contact to a person that has tested positive for COVID-19 within the school setting. We are pleased our advocacy efforts helped to expedite approval of this program to ensure students can remain in school for in-person learning.

Both the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the ECDOH have reduced the duration of both the isolation time of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 and the isolation time of a person who is determined to be an unvaccinated close contact.

Please note the following:

- The maximum duration of quarantine for an a-symptomatic, unvaccinated close contact is now five (5) days rather than ten (10) days.
- The duration of isolation for a person who tests positive has also changed to five (5) days instead of ten (10), as long as the person's symptoms have substantially resolved or are improving and there has been no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication AND the student can wear a mask comfortably, while at school.
- The goal of this TEST TO STAY program is to add an additional layer of mitigation to our already safe learning and working environment in school.
- We wish to maximize the opportunity for students to remain in school for in-person learning.
- In-person learning provides the opportunity for all healthy children to benefit educationally, academically, socially, emotionally, physically and nutritionally. The benefits of in-person learning are powerful when we consider student growth.

The TEST TO STAY program will be available for any student PK-12 (pre-k programs that are on site within our elementary building) who are identified as "close contacts" of a COVID-19 case from a school exposure and who are also not vaccinated.

A family may take advantage of the TTS by bringing their child to school before the start of the school day and have the child tested using an Antigen or Rapid COVID-19 test, provided by the ECDOH. This test takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and CONSENT to be tested must be provided, prior to the child being tested.

**DETAILS/REQUIREMENTS of the TESTING for TEST TO STAY:**

- The parent/person in parental relationship to the child **MUST GIVE CONSENT**. Consent is considered "one time" and covers any/all exposures for 2022.
- The exposure occurred within the school setting and the child, then, is considered a "close contact" of the person who tested positive while both persons were consistently and properly masked.

- The child (close contact) is unvaccinated and remains a-symptomatic (not exhibiting symptoms)
- The child/close contact will be tested a minimum of 2 times during the 5 day period following exposure, unless recognition of this exposure is delayed or weekends or school breaks interfere with this timeline.
- The 5 day period is measured by calendar days, where the last date of exposure is considered day 0. The 1st test will occur on the day immediately after the close contact notification occurs. The second test will be done on day 5.
- All testing will take place on the main campus of CCSD. All students PK-12, whose families have granted consent for the TEST TO STAY program will report to the High School, enter at door #5 and register with the intake staff member for testing purposes (see details regarding location, testing protocols, etc.). All testing will take place within the high school in the corridor/area behind the auditorium, closest to door #5 and the main parking lot.
- Please note that students participating in the TEST TO STAY program during the 5 day period of time and whose parents have granted consent, are allowed to continue to ride the school bus, but we very much prefer that the parents/guardians provide personal transportation for their children involved in the TTS program.
- During the 5 day period of time, New York State does NOT allow children to participate in co-curricular activities and or sports, until the 6th day after exposure.
- If during the period of participation in the TTS program the child/student tests positive for COVID-19, the student will be excluded/isolated per existing COVID-19 protocols and contact tracing will commence immediately.
- Families will be notified of results at the time of testing. If the child tests negative, he/she will be immediately cleared to attend school. If the child tests positive, he/she will be isolated and sent home.

It is also important for everyone to know that the tests that many of you received during the New Year's weekend were only to be used as an informal, additional layer of mitigation of the spread of COVID-19. As we continue to do our part in helping our community at large in the fight against this virus, we are offering this new TEST TO STAY program to help provide a level of relief for all of you.

Why? Relief comes in knowing that we can test your child and keep him or her in school learning. Our district mission statement is: It's All About the Learning. Please know that here at CCSD, we all want your children to continue to learn and grow in the most healthy, positive environment possible. Our teachers, administrators, nurses and staff are ready to assist you.

Your Partner in Education,

Steven L. Wright  
Superintendent of Schools

**Cheektowaga Central School District**  
**TEST TO STAY Program: Commonly Asked Questions**

**Q: Can my child participate in the Test to Stay (TTS) program if their exposure occurred outside of school?**

A: No. The exposure must have occurred in the school setting and while both the person with COVID-19 (called the “index patient”) and exposed student/person were consistently and properly masked.

**Q: What if I choose not to have my student participate in the TTS program?**

A: Students who are unvaccinated and whose families choose not to have them participate in the TTS program will be required to quarantine for 10 days after exposure as required by ECDOH.

**Q: Is there a cost or fee to participate in the TTS program?**

A: No. There is no cost or fee for a student to participate in the TTS program.

**Q: When will the daily rapid antigen test be administered to my child if he or she is not vaccinated, identified as a “close contact” and was exposed in school?**

A: The daily rapid antigen test must be administered to unvaccinated, identified “close contact” students who were exposed in school AND whose parent has granted CONSENT to participate in the program PRIOR to the start of the school day. The ECDOH requires that the TEST TO STAY be administered at school and the test(s) cannot be administered in the home. The Cheektowaga CSD will be testing students for the TEST TO STAY program as identified (identified as a “close contact”, exposed at school, unvaccinated and with parental consent) before the school day starts as follows:

**Location:** Cheektowaga High School, entry at door #5 ONLY.

**Time:** High School Students beginning at 6:30-7:15 AM  
Middle School Students beginning at 7:15-7:45 AM  
Union East Elementary Students beginning at 8:00-8:30 AM  
Monday through Friday each week.

**Process:** ALL PK-12 identified students will be tested on the main campus in the High School located at 3600 Union Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14225. Students and parents accompanying their child should arrive on the main campus and park in the parking lot to the left of the high school. Entry will be at door #5 ONLY which is behind the high school directly next to the parking lot. Upon entry, the identified student and parent should make the first left once inside the door, speak with the registration staff member/attendance and be tested. The child will then be directed into the high school auditorium to wait while the test is timed. Results of the test will be provided to the parent as positive or negative. If negative, the child can attend school and if

positive, the child will be isolated and sent home. All test results are reported to Erie County and the New York State Department of Health.

**Q: Can my child ride the bus when participating in the TTS program?**

A: Yes. While participating in the TTS program, testing negative and while a-symptomatic, your child can ride the bus.

**Q: Can my child participate in activities outside of the school day (clubs, activities, after school sports)?**

A: No. TEST TO STAY as per the NYSDOH, does not permit a student to participate in sports, extracurricular activities or other activities at school outside of the school day for the duration of the 10 day quarantine period.

**Q: Is daily testing required on weekends and holidays?**

A: No. Daily testing as part of the TTS program is only required on days when school is in session (weekends and holidays are excluded). Tests will therefore not be administered on weekends or holidays.

**Q: What if my child develops symptoms during the time he or she is participating in the program?**

A: If your child who is participating in the TTS program develops symptoms or becomes symptomatic, he or she must be excluded from the school as per the current ECDOH guidance.

**SYMPTOMS at SCHOOL or (SAS):**

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat

*If your child participates in the TTS program and tests negative, he or she will go to school. If he or she tests positive, they are isolated and sent home immediately.*

*It has long been our practice to send a student home if they come to our school clinics with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea and that will continue. Please remember to **NOT SEND YOUR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL IF THEY ARE SICK WITH THESE SYMPTOMS.***

**CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**PARENTAL CONSENT FOR TEST TO STAY PROGRAM**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Schools-Please select/circle one: Union East Elementary; Cheektowaga Middle School or Cheektowaga Central High School

Your child has been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. Your child is eligible to participate in the "Test to Stay" program.

In order for your child to be allowed into this program, please complete this permission form and return it to the school nurse. Please read all attachments carefully.

I have read and understand the following:

- My child has not been fully vaccinated
- His/her exposure(s) occurred during instruction at school or during bus transportation to or from instruction. Students whose exposures occurred outside of school instruction or bus transportation to or from instruction are not eligible for the program.
  - *Students with household exposures (e.g. siblings) are not eligible for the program.*
- The infected student and the exposed student must have consistently and correctly worn well-fitting masks during the exposure.
- Have not developed any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 at any time since their exposure.
  - Parents of participating students whose household contacts have signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should not send their child to school and instead contact the school nurse.
- Correctly wear well-fitting masks in school at all times, other than when eating or drinking. When these individuals cannot be masked, they should maintain 6 feet of distance from other individuals, whenever possible. Maintaining 6 feet of distance is required when eating or drinking inside.
- Have at least two (2) FDA authorized rapid antigen tests administered at school within a five (5) day period by an appropriately trained school employee or healthcare provider and receive a negative result prior to reporting to class. At least one of the two tests must occur on day five post-exposure to COVID-19. On days when school is not open (e.g. weekends, holidays), testing is not required.



- ***My signature on this form is considered a “one time consent”, allowing my child to be tested for this purpose at school. I need only sign once and my child is covered for 2022.***

- At home tests do not qualify for this protocol.

- **As a parent/guardian I agree to:**

- Conduct active monitoring (explicitly asking the student about signs and symptoms of COVID-19) each day before and after school.

- Immediately contact the child’s healthcare provider and school if any signs or symptoms develop.

- Refrain from sending the participating student to school if any signs or symptoms develop in the child or anyone in the home and call the school nurse to report the symptoms.

- Promptly pick up their child from school, should they test positive or develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19 during school instruction.

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**Parent Name (Print)**

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**Parent Signature**

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**Date**