



SOUTH HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT  
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DR. JAHMAL MOSLEY  
Superintendent

January 21, 2022

Dear South Hadley Parents and Caregivers:

On January 18, Governor Baker and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) suddenly announced a significant change in the current COVID testing protocols particularly as relates to Test and Stay. This modification was prompted by the cumbersome and time-consuming requirements of the Test and Stay program especially with regard to contact tracing.

As a result, on Tuesday of this week (January 18th) school districts throughout the state were allowed to move away from Test and Stay IF they agreed to adopt the state's new 2-part proposal for testing by today in order to be among the first to receive at-home test kits for parents/caregivers. This 2-part plan includes:

- (1) An agreement from school districts to dispense AT HOME TEST KITS, provided free of charge from the state, to every staff member and family who have requested them by completing an OPT IN FORM.
- (2) An agreement from school districts to participate either in pool testing OR symptomatic testing, which requires a CONSENT FORM on file.

The South Hadley School District has elected to participate in symptomatic testing only.

Here's what that means for staff:

January 18 staff received a survey (required by DESE) asking of their interest in receiving free at home tests. Results needed to be provided to DESE by Friday, January 21.

- Today at approximately 11:30 AM, DESE announced a NEW opt-in form that staff needed to complete—this form replaced the previous survey, yet still completed by the end of the day today!
- That process is under way as I write this.

- Participating districts will begin to receive their allotment of tests FOR STAFF (based on the number of opt in forms submitted to DESE) beginning the week of January 24th CONTINGENT UPON DESE'S APPROVAL.
- Distribution plans (including location(s) of distribution and schedules for distribution) FOR STAFF are being developed and will be shared in multiple formats over the next few days.

Here's what that means for parents/caregivers: see link below for opt in form

1. Parents/caregivers who wish to have their child/children participate in IN-SCHOOL SYMPTOMATIC TESTING are required to have a CONSENT FORM on file in the school BEFORE they can participate in SYMPTOMATIC TESTING. Participation in symptomatic testing IS NOT REQUIRED but is HIGHLY ENCOURAGED.
2. Parents/caregivers who have already provided a consent for TEST and Stay will not have to provide an additional consent form for participation in symptomatic testing.
3. If parents/caregivers wish NOT to participate in symptomatic testing and have a consent on file they must CALL THE SCHOOL NURSE and ask for the consent form to be deleted.
4. Participating districts will begin to receive their allotment of tests FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS beginning the week of January 31st pending approval from DESE.
5. Distribution plans for at home tests (including location(s) of distribution and schedules for distribution) FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS are being developed and will be shared in multiple formats over the next few days.
6. Please use this [link](#) to OPT IN to receive at-home test kits. Your completed opt-in form MUST be received no later than January 28, 2022.

Here's what that means for students:

1. Students will no longer be identified as close contacts within the school setting
2. Students experiencing COVID-like symptoms are expected to remain home from school and follow up with their health care provider.
3. Students who develop COVID-like symptoms WHILE IN SCHOOL are expected to report those symptoms to the school nurse
4. Symptomatic students who have a CONSENT FORM on file in the school will then be tested by the CIC health team (symptomatic testing).
  - a. All students are eligible for participation in symptomatic testing REGARDLESS of vaccination status.
  - b. Negative testing students may be allowed to return to class based on the kind and severity of symptoms as determined through evaluation by the school nurse.
  - c. Positive testing students are required to be sent home per DESE and DPH guidelines and are expected to follow DESE and DPH protocols for isolation.

As you can see, developments in this area are changing daily—sometimes hourly. We will post additional information about this change to our testing protocols, prompted by the state, on our website over the next few days.

Finally, please be on the lookout for an email on Monday, January 24th that will include the OPT IN FORM that must be filled out and submitted in order to qualify to receive free at-home testing kits.

There will be a virtual forum on Wednesday, January 26th @ 6:00 PM. I will be making a one-call this weekend to remind the community about the forum. Please use this [Zoom link](#) to access the open forum.

My best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jahmal Mosley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Dr. Jahmal Mosley