

NEWS FROM THE NURSE'S OFFICE November, 19 2021

Dear Families,

I was about to send out the update this morning when we learned that we had in-school positivity. Please rest assured that we would have called you if it was determined that your child(ren) is a close contact. Currently, with the most cases of Covid-19 in Vermont since the beginning of the pandemic, schools are seeing increased cases of Covid-19. Sometimes despite following the Covid mitigation guidelines, some things still go awry. I liken it to driving a car, and despite following the rules of the road, sometimes accidents happen. At times like these, we can become engulfed in fear, OR we can turn our energy to the strength we gain being in this community and providing support to those who are in distress.

We are on our way to making our school safer for students. Preliminary data indicates that the Pfizer vaccine in children ages 5-11 is 90% effective in preventing Covid-19 infections. Additionally, with more children vaccinated, the rate of community transmission will likely be slowed. On Tuesday, the HealthHub vaccinated over 50 students at SES! The second vaccination date will be December 7th, at which time vaccination cards will be handed out. A number of SES students have also been vaccinated outside of school.

If your child(ren) haven't been vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine and you would like them to be, there's several options you can pursue. You can sign up online through the VT Health Department Covid-19 website (see link on our website). Many PCP practices are also providing vaccinations. When I checked online today, it appears that Hannafords in W. Lebanon and Bradford; Walmart in W. Lebanon; and Kinney Drugs in Bradford and Randolph have the 5-11 year old dose of the Pfizer vaccine. The pharmacies, however, are not covered by Dr. Dynasaur health insurance.

There's been a lot of students with symptoms similar to the symptoms of Covid-19 over the past few weeks. Before the pandemic, we ignored minor symptoms, but now, in order to keep SES safe and open during the pandemic, we are adhering to the fluid Covid-19 mitigation guidelines. The most common symptoms of the Delta virus are a sore throat, congestion, headache, or fever. I know that it is a great hardship for parents to follow the guidelines, which means missing school, work, and on top of that, having to schedule PCR tests. Hopefully, on November 22nd, we'll be rolling out the PCR component of the "test-to-stay" program at SES. The antigen test-to-stay program will be launched on December 2nd. **It is voluntary to opt into the program, and people cannot participate in the in-school testing until they fill out the consent form.** People who have signed the consent form will have an online portal called Binx to view their PCR results. If you haven't done so, I encourage you to sign-up your student; follow the link on our website to do so.

Nuts and Bolts of the In-School Test-to-Stay Program

In-School Exposure to Covid-19: Once it has been determined who are close contacts, **during the seven day quarantine period:**

- **Fully vaccinated** individuals (with proof of vaccination) who are **asymptomatic** stay in school and have a PCR test in 3-5 days.
- **Fully vaccinated** individuals who are **symptomatic or become symptomatic** should stay home or be sent home. They can return to school when feeling better and with confirmation of a negative PCR test. Those who have signed the consent form can have a PCR test done in school and wait for results at home, typically within 24 hours.

- **Unvaccinated** individuals who **have** filled out the consent form for the screen-to-stay program will do a **daily antigen test in school over seven days**. The test is self-administered in the nostril. Trained individuals, including me, will provide verbal guidance. The PCR test is very sensitive in picking up an infection but takes several days to get results. Antigen tests sometimes are negative early on in an infection when there isn't enough viral load to detect infection but the advantage is that you have results in 15-30 minutes. The most common incubation period for Covid-19 is 3-5 days (but can be up to 14 days). If the **antigen test is negative, an individual stays at school**, which is essentially an extension of their quarantine. Once the school day is over, they need to quarantine back at home. If their test is **positive, they are sent home, and if practical, they'll isolate themselves from the rest of their family for ten days, at which point they can return to school if feeling better**. Screen-to-Stay programs **are only implemented for school-based exposures**, as the transmission of Covid-19 is less likely in this setting than in other community environments. If a K-12 student is a close contact due to an exposure outside of the school setting, they must follow current guidance and quarantine at home.
- Unvaccinated individuals who have not filled out the consent form for the screen-to-stay program will have quarantine at home for seven days if they are asymptomatic and then can return to school with confirmation of a negative PCR test on day seven or after, or continue to quarantine for 14 days. If they are symptomatic, it is recommended to have a PCR test initially, and if negative, then test again on day 7 of their quarantine.

Symptomatic Staff and Students

Regardless of whether you are fully vaccinated or unvaccinated, anyone with any of these possible Covid-19 symptoms (fever, sore throat, runny nose, headache, cough, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle aches, shortness of breath, lack of taste/smell) need to stay home or go home if they symptoms develop at school. Those who have signed the consent form can have a PCR done test in school before heading home, and If symptoms persist for more than 24 hours, an individual can return to school when feeling better and confirmation of a negative PCR result.

COVID-19 Testing At-A-Glance :

It's not part of the in-school test to stay program, but SES has take-home PCR test kits that are available for families. The family is responsible for testing and delivering the completed tests to a UPS drop-off site within 24-48 hours of completing it. (Welch's Hardware Store in SR has UPS drop-off). The results will be sent to the family, and SES will not be notified of the results. You can contact me if you need kits for one or more people in your immediate family.

I know this is a lot of information to digest. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at **JLLOYD@WRVSU.ORG** or call at **802-788-8048** (direct line to my office).

Have a wonderful rest of the week!

NURSE JILL

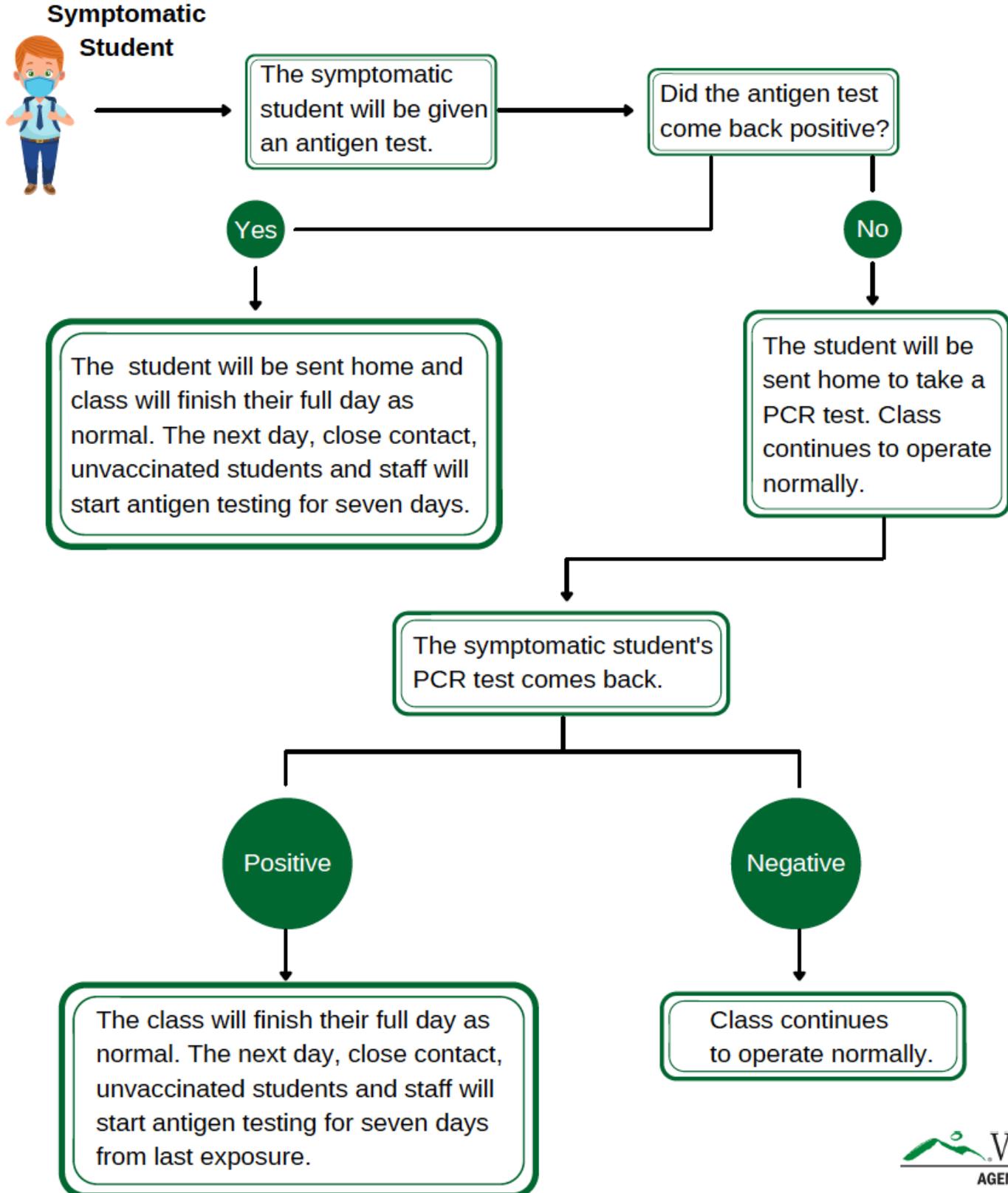
School Nurse
Healthy Children Learn Better

Invaluable, Improves Attendance, Professional Caregiver, Caring, Healer, Kind, Wellness Assessment, Skilled, Compassionate, Listener, Emergency, Disease Manager, Awesome, Educated, Kind

COVID-19 TESTING AT-A-GLANCE

This document is intended to outline the different testing types that are available in our schools. Schools will deploy these tools based on specific protocols provided by the Agency of Education and Department of Health. More information about how and when each tool should be used is available on the Agency of Education's website.

TEST TYPE #1 TEST TO STAY



COVID-19 TESTING AT-A-GLANCE

TEST TYPE #2 IN SCHOOL PCR TESTING

Schools may administer in-school PCR response tests. These tests are intended for any of the following scenarios:

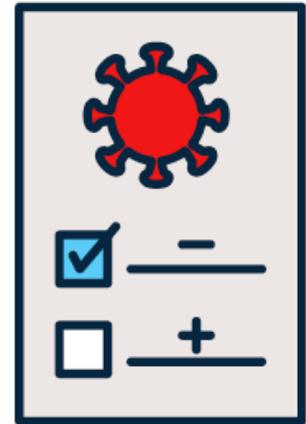
- testing symptomatic students/staff after a negative antigen test or in the absence of an antigen test.
- testing a large number of students or staff members out of quarantine.
- testing vaccinated close contacts of COVID-19 cases between days 3 and 5 after exposure.



TEST TYPE #3 TAKE HOME PCR TESTING

These test kits are intended for a broad range of uses, including members of the public, symptomatic students who need to stay home, and their families. Recommended uses include:

- symptomatic students/staff.
- close contacts of COVID-19 cases.
- any member of the school community or their family who needs a test.



TYPE #4 OPT-OUT OF TESTING

If an unvaccinated student or staff member has been identified as a close contact chooses not to participate in testing, they will have to quarantine for 14 days.

