



**Groton-Dunstable Regional School District**  
**Laura S. Chesson, ED.D-Superintendent**  
**344 Main Street, Groton, MA 01450**  
**978-448-5505**

February 4, 2021

Dear parents, caregivers, and guardians,

Thank you for your continued partnership during this unprecedented school year. In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we have been working closely with 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 at our school.**

The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission to regularly test your child as part of a pooled testing program at our schools. Pooled testing involves mixing several individuals's 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 once per week with a shallow nasal swab for all participating students and staff members. 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 student requires follow-up testing. The nurses in each school will be providing the Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Tests for follow-up testing, so that students or staff in a positive pool can be tested as soon as possible and receive individual results in 15 minutes.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Individuals who have previously tested positive (on an individual, not pooled, test) in the past 90 days will be excluded from participation but are able to be included in the pools again after 90 days. Please refer to the consent form for additional information.

Designated staff will be thoroughly trained on how to undertake pooled testing, as well as our School Nurses already have received thorough training with the Abbott BinaxNOW

Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Tests, if they are needed for follow-up testing. Your student's school nurse will call you if your child is part of a positive pool and requires follow-up testing. They will also notify you of the individual follow-up test results and if your child is positive or negative and what to do in each scenario.

Groton-Dunstable Regional School District will report all follow-up test results to DPH. District Nursing staff will also provide positive follow-up test results (without names or other identifying information) to DESE's Rapid Response Help Unit.

To give permission for your student to participate in the COVID-19 Pooled Testing Program at our schools, 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 (non-profit) organization contracted to compile consent for testing and to share test results), please click on the following link to complete the consent form:

CLICK LINK: [\*\*CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN OPTIONAL POOLED TESTING PROGRAM\*\*](#)

A paper permission form may be requested if you cannot access the online site. Consents must be received by Monday, February 8th by noon, in order to participate in pooled testing starting Wednesday, February 10, 2021. Consents received after that date will be eligible to participate in the following week's pool collection.

At Groton-Dunstable Regional Schools we are extremely grateful to our committed staff and families that continue to show great flexibility and resilience as we navigate through this school year. It takes all of us working together to contain the spread of this virus. We are excited to add pooled testing as another mitigation strategy for our school community, as we continue to work together toward the safe return of all students and staff to school.

If you have questions regarding the COVID-19 Pooled Testing Program or if you would prefer a paper permission form, please reach out to Jill Greene, District COVID Liaison/Testing Coordinator at [jgreene@gdrsd.org](mailto:jgreene@gdrsd.org).

Sincerely,



Laura S. Chesson, Ed.D  
Superintendent