



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

January 29, 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 share with you that, during the week of February 8th, we will be beginning a pooled testing program in our school district. During the next two weeks parents and guardians will receive a link to use to provide consent for their students to participate in the pool testing process. Only students whose parents provide consent will be part of this program. Pooled testing involves mixing 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, defrays the cost of testing, 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.

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.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact your student's School Nurse.

Sincerely,



Laura S. Chesson, Ed.D
Superintendent