

**USD 320 COVID TESTING PROGRAM**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**Updated 10.28.21**

- 1. Where is the USD 320 Covid Testing Center and what are its hours?** The Center is located at 1004 Poplar which, among other things, was the Home Video Store. Its regular hours are M-F; 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Parking in front of the Center is limited, but Heartland Foods graciously allows the use of their east side parking lot, closest to the street. The Center follows the school calendar and is closed on days that school is not in session for students and staff.
- 2. Can anyone get tested there?** At this time only USD 320 students and staff are being tested at the Center.
- 3. If we would choose to have our child tested daily would they be able to be in the regular classroom but have to wear a mask?** Yes. Wearing a mask is a KDHE requirement of the “test to stay” program.
- 4. If we would choose to have our child tested daily would they be able to participate in sporting practices and games?** Yes. . .but just a word of caution if they were to test positive they would risk quarantining teammates.
- 5. If we would choose to have our child tested daily would they be able to be able to ride the bus to sporting events with the team?** Yes. See #4 above.
- 6. How long are antigen test results good for?** 24 hours. So, if a student tests negative at noon, they may go to school and be in activities until noon the next day.
- 7. If my child is in the test-to-stay program can they ride the bus to & from school?** A student who is a close contact and on quarantine, but testing-to-stay can ride school transportation if they have negative test results. A test result is good for 24 hours. So, if a student tests negative at noon, they can ride the bus home in the afternoon and to school the next morning. They could not ride the bus home that afternoon (or be in school after noon) unless they obtained another negative test result.
- 8. My child is a close contact because someone in our home tested positive. Can they test-to-stay?** At this time, yes if two conditions are met: #1 a mask must be worn while in school during the period of testing and #2 there must be total separation at home from the person who tested positive. This means separate bedroom, separate bathroom, separate meal times, & no physical contact.  
Failure to comply with these two requirements will lead to a ten-day out-of-school quarantine and the test-to-stay program begins after that for another 8-10 days. If the test-to-stay program is not chosen, the student must stay out of school for another ten days.

Some schools are requiring a ten-day at-home quarantine for in-home close contacts BEFORE the start of the test-to-stay program. If the student declines to take part in the test-to-stay program there is an additional ten day at-home quarantine.

**9. If my student is vaccinated and identified as a close contact, do they have to test-to-stay to avoid quarantine?** No. those who are vaccinated are not required to quarantine nor do they need to test unless they become symptomatic.

**10. How does the school know if my student tests negative and can go to class?** They will receive an “admit” slip at the testing center when they get their negative result. Presenting that admit slip at the front office lets the school know they are OK to be in school.

**11. Where does the information of my student’s test result go?** All covid test results, positive and negative, are shared with the County Health which uses it to determine the dates and lengths of quarantines and isolations. The results are shared with KDHE to be included on their dashboard data for the state and by specific county. The school nurses receive the info so they can do contact tracing if necessary.

**12. Who decides when and how long quarantines or isolations are?** The County Health Department is responsible for determining this, based on the testing and close contact tracing done by the school. The parents of the affected students receive an email with the official notification. Usually this occurs within 24-48 hours of the report to the County Health.

**13. How accurate are the antigen tests being used?** No test is 100% accurate and false negatives and positives are possible. However, we are being told by the KDHE that the viral load of the Delta Variant is so powerful that a positive result on the rapid antigen tests is 96% accurate.

**14. How long does the antigen test take?** It literally takes just a few seconds to administer the rapid antigen test. It consists of circling a large “q-tip” around the bottom of the inside of each nostril several times. The swab must set in the reactive agent for a minimum of 15 minutes and no more than 30 minutes to be accurate.

**15. What happens if my student is testing to stay, and they test negative for several days but then test positive?** They will be considered a positive case and not allowed to return to school. Contact tracing for their contacts over the previous 48 will begin.

**16. Does my student have to take a PCR test?** PCRs are typically used in two instances: (1) to verify a negative antigen reading when a person is exhibiting classic symptoms, such as loss of taste and/or smell and (2) if the student is wanting to test out of quarantine two days early.

**17. How long does it take to read a PCR test?** The ones used in our Test Center are similar to the antigen test; it requires a mid-nasal swab and the results are available in 30 minutes at our test center. This is a recent change.

**18. Why are students supposed to wear masks on school buses and in school vans?** It is a federal requirement that masks be worn on public transportation. It has been determined by the federal government that school transportation is public transportation in the same category as air lines, passenger trains and commercial buses.

**19. Why can't we use at-home tests if they are same brand and kind?** To make sure the tests are being correctly administered and read our County Health Department requires that the tests be administered and read by a disinterested 3<sup>rd</sup> party who are qualified as a result of receiving the necessary training.

**20. How is the testing program being paid for?** As part of the Cares Act substantial amounts of money were appropriated to the State Health Departments to set up testing programs. Kansas received right at \$85 million to use for school testing programs. We applied for and received a grant.

**21. Will this be around next year?** We hope not. If it is it means Covid is still with us. It also will depend on funding. If the State's grant money is all used this year the testing programs will not be funded next year.

**22. If we would choose to have our child tested daily would they be "secluded" at lunch?** No, they are not required to be segregated at lunch and they do not have to wear a mask so long as they are actively eating.

**23. What is the difference between an antigen test and a PCR test?**

An antigen test is frequently referred to as a rapid test. This test detects protein fragments specific to the Coronavirus. The turnaround time for results is usually very quick and results can be reported within 15 minutes.

A PCR test detects RNA (or genetic material) that is specific to the virus. It can detect the virus within days of infection, even in those who have no symptoms. The turnaround time used to be longer, generally in the 24-48 hour range. However, there have been rapid PCR tests developed and we use them in our Test Center. These tests require a special device to read the sample which we also have in our Test Center. The results are ready in 30 minutes.

**24. Are quarantine classrooms still available at the Middle and High Schools?** No, unfortunately, this option was not being used enough to justify its use.