

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Brandon M. Scott**  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

**Jhnette A. Richardson**  
Chair, Baltimore City Board  
of School Commissioners

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
Chief Executive Officer

## **2022 – 2023 School Year Parent/Guardian Consent Form and COVID Awareness Agreement** **Families are required to submit one consent form per student**

More than ever before, we all – individually and collectively – share responsibility for the well-being of our students, staff, families, and neighbors. In order to keep our community safe, City Schools has developed robust health and safety protocols during the COVID pandemic. These protocols are based on the latest medical research, best practices, and input from the Baltimore City Health Department, our public health advisors, and other stakeholders. They are described in detail in the [City Schools Health and Safety Guide](#).

As a valued member of our City Schools community, I commit to do my part to follow these protocols, so that we can help all our students and staff be well and thrive. In addition, I agree to:

- Follow all rules for my child’s participation in school activities.
- Collaborate with school staff to help ensure that my child follows all isolation, quarantine and other safety rules set forth in [City Schools Health and Safety Guide](#) and the [Code of Student Conduct](#).
- Keep my child home AND report to City Schools if my child has a confirmed or suspected case of COVID.
- Ensure that my child participates in City Schools COVID Testing Program including the Test to Stay program. Participating in Test to Stay will minimize the time my child has to quarantine due to COVID exposure (See page 2 for details.)
- Ensure that, if my child becomes ill while attending in-person learning, my child is picked up promptly after receiving an on-site COVID test.

### **Baltimore City Public Schools On-Site COVID Testing Program**

The City Schools COVID Testing Program is **convenient, safe, and free of charge**. Testing may be conducted for the following purposes:

- **Screening Testing**: These tests are designed to find infections early, before symptoms develop. Screening testing reduces infection for everyone, including students, staff, families and others in our community.
- **Symptomatic Testing**: If a staff member or student starts to feel sick at school with symptoms that may mean a COVID infection, they will receive a COVID test.
- **Test To Stay**: Students or staff who have had close contact with a COVID-positive person no longer have to miss important time in school. Students and staff will receive in-school rapid antigen tests if they are part of a pool that tests positive or if they are identified as a close contact to an individual who tests positive. Anyone who tests negative can stay in school. Participating in “test to stay” is an important step in ensuring your child has consistent and reliable access to in-person learning as community conditions and case rates change over time.

Depending on the community conditions, this program may include the types of testing outlined below.

- **Pooled PCR Testing**: Students and staff in classroom pods self-administer collection of their own sample (unless the student needs assistance) by inserting a small swab into the front of their nose. Nasal swabs from a pod or pods are combined and tested in a group at a central laboratory. Pooled testing does not identify any specific individual who may have COVID or collect personal information. If COVID is identified in the pod, individual testing is required and will be administered at school. The pooled test is not required to be approved or authorized by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and is not an FDA approved or authorized test nor a medical diagnostic test. Results are typically available in 24-48 hours.
- **Saliva-based PCR Testing**: Students and staff put saliva (spit) in a tube, which is collected and sent to a central laboratory for testing. Results are typically available in 24-48 hours.
- **Rapid antigen test**: A self-administered nasal swab is conducted at school or at home. Results are typically available in 15-20 minutes.
- **Molecular PCR test**: A self-administered nasal swab is sent to a lab for processing. Results are typically available in 2-3 days.

### **Test providers**

Test providers currently include Baltimore City Health Department, Maryland Department of Health, Mako Medical, and the Maryland State Department of Education; ShieldT3 (saliva-based PCR testing); Abbott BinaxNOW (rapid antigen test); iHealth COVID Rapid Test, Flowflex COVID Antigen Home Test, and Concentric by Ginkgo (pooled and rapid testing). Any changes to test providers will be shared with parents and posted at <https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/covid-screens>, which contains additional details about the testing program.

**By signing this consent form, I voluntarily agree to have my child participate in the City Schools COVID testing program, and I authorize collection of my child’s nasal and/or saliva swab sample. I understand:**

- The potential risks of nasal swab collection, if performed as instructed, include discomfort from the insertion of the swabs. Any irritation is expected to be brief.
- Testing will regularly occur during the school day when parents are not present.
- As with any COVID test, there is the potential for incorrect (false positive or false negative) results.
- Samples will be tested by trained staff or test providers working under an agreement with City Schools. Results will be shared with City Schools, students’ parents/guardians, test providers, the Maryland Department of Health, the Baltimore City Health Department, and CRISP (Maryland Health Information Exchange), but *only* for public health purposes (such as contact tracing and taking other steps to prevent the further spread of COVID in your school community) and in accordance with applicable law and State and local policies protecting student privacy and the security of your child’s data. Information that may be shared includes your child’s name and test results, date of birth/age, demographic data, school or program participation, classroom/cohort/pod, enrollment and attendance, parent/guardian names, address, telephone, mobile number, and email address.
- While no medical experimental research will be conducted using test samples, City Schools and its contractors monitor aspects of the Coronavirus, such as tracking viral mutations by sequencing viruses and microbes in samples collected through the program, for epidemiological and public health purposes. City Schools also is collaborating with local universities, including Morgan State University, University of Maryland, and Johns Hopkins University, on a public health initiative to figure out which testing strategies are most effective.
- City Schools and the test providers are not, and are not acting as, my child’s medical provider, and this testing does not replace treatment by my child’s medical provider, and I will follow up with a medical provider to determine appropriate action with regard to my child’s test results.

I understand that failure to sign and return this form will limit my child’s ability to fully participate in school programming and it will prevent my child from participating in “test to stay,” which could lead to missed instruction time and longer quarantines. Furthermore, failure to comply with the rules herein may endanger our entire community and require City Schools to take steps necessary to protect the welfare of other students and staff in the building. For information on the risks associated with COVID, visit: [www.baltimorecityschools.org/safety-procedures](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/safety-procedures). I acknowledge that I have reviewed these risks and expectations.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/ Guardian Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I may sign this form and return it to my school, or I may submit this form electronically by typing my name and date. I understand that electronic submission of this form constitutes and is the equivalent of my personal signature.

### **OPT-OUT OF CITY SCHOOLS ON-SITE COVID-19 TESTING PROGRAM**

*Note: If you do not want your child to participate in City Schools’ testing program for any reason, you may decline to participate. However, unless you have an approved medical or religious exemption, you will be required to have your child tested through another organization within 24 hours of when they would have been tested through the City Schools program and provide City Schools with the test results. For details on how to opt-out of City Schools testing program, please reach out to your student’s principal to request an opt- out form.*