

School-Based COVID-19 Testing/Screening Playbook for School Districts-Mississippi, April 2021

Follow up Questions from the April 28, 2021 MSDH School-Based COVID-19 Testing/Screening Informational Webinar. Please see the slide set from April 28, 2021 for an overview of the program and for additional questions.

Q. What is the program?

A. Through funding from CDC, MSDH will support on-site serial testing of asymptomatic teachers and students in each interested MS K-12 school district in a Phased approach. The goal is to provide an additional layer of protection for teachers, employees and students and facilitate continued in-person learning through the rapid identification of cases.

Q. What are the Phases?

A. Phase 1-MSDH will directly provide rapid test kits to each interested school district to rapid initiate on-site testing of asymptomatic teachers/students through the remainder of the school year and in school sponsored summer activities.

Phase 2-MSDH will manage vendor agreements to support on-site testing through the 2021-2022 school year. Vendors will be responsible for all aspects of testing, including supplies, collection, and reporting. The goal is to have these in place by the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

Q. Are school districts required to participate?

A. Not at this time. This is voluntary for interested school districts.

Q. Who is testing recommended for?

A. Asymptomatic teachers and students weekly.

Q. Are all asymptomatic teachers and students required to test weekly if a school district is interested?

A. No, this is completely voluntary. We do recommend consent forms for students.

Q. Can a school district wait for Phase 2, or if interested do they need to sign up for Phase 1 now?

A. Schools can wait for Phase 2 when rolled out. Participation in Phase 1 is not mandatory for participation in Phase 2.

Q. Can we test only contacts instead of routine serial testing on students and teachers?

A. MSDH does not recommend limiting this to contact testing only. All interested students/teachers/employees and staff should be offered weekly testing on a voluntary basis. Contact testing can also be used to allow students to continue in-person classes. See the slides for full details.

Q. Is this a self-collect test?

A. No, this test should be collected by a trained staff member?

Q. Does the test require a nurse or other medical professional to conduct?

A. No, any staff member can be trained to collect and interpret the test

Q. MSDH will reimburse the school districts for each test performed. What can the funds be used for?

A. Funds can be used for any operational expenses necessary to support the testing agreement.