

Good Afternoon SJS Families,

I hope everyone is well and transitioning into the school year. It has been a busy start to the year for the Health Office. The Test and Stay program and symptomatic testing for students is now up and running. I apologize you have filled out a form and it did not load in the system. Below is the link for the portal and our protocols. It's not too late to sign up! It makes the process more smooth if your student is already enrolled.

Here is the link to the consent portal- [Click Here](#)
DESE Protocols- [Click Here](#)

SJS Protocols were developed and updated September 2021 with respect to the current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, and the Canton Board of Health. The school nurse also connects with the School Physician on an as needed basis.

Please remember that the School Nurse disseminates this guidance and information from the state level. Note: In some cases, individuals may be asked to follow specific testing and quarantine response protocols (including durations for quarantine/isolation) provided by contact tracers or local health officials which may differ from the recommended protocols presented in the DESE protocols. My goal is to keep students healthy and learning, however, I must adhere to the recommendations set forth by the above parties. Respect when communicating with the School Nurse is greatly appreciated.

Information about our two testing programs at SJS

1.Symptomatic Testing

- Used for students who start to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at school. (If symptomatic **BEFORE** school, the student should stay home and the nurse should be called.)
- Symptoms of the virus can look identical to other illnesses like allergies, cold or flu, and this test determines if a symptomatic student has COVID-19.
- This is a rapid test (Abbott BinaxNow), and we receive the results of this test within 15 minutes.
- If a student has minimal symptoms (excluding fever or vomiting) and tests are negative, they may remain in school instead of being sent home.

2. Test and Stay

- Used for students and staff who may have been exposed to a positive person inside or outside of school. (We are following Canton Public Schools Policy, this is an updated change as of 10/1/21)
- ***If they are not showing symptoms, instead of having to quarantine and miss school, these students and staff will be tested daily with a rapid test while they remain in school as long as they are NOT symptomatic.***
- Students and staff participate in Test and Stay for 7 days after they have been exposed to a positive individual.

Please note:** Test and Stay is not available for unvaccinated close contacts exposed to a positive individual living in the same household. The close contact unvaccinated individual will be required to follow the traditional protocol of quarantining for 7 days, testing by a PCR or Antigen test on day 5. If the individual remains asymptomatic and tests negative, they may come out of quarantine on day 8 and return to school. ***This protocol is supported by local safety officials because the rate of transmission in a household is extremely high. Close contacts must be able to isolate themselves from the + individual in the household. If this cannot occur there maybe different isolation/quarantine protocols.

*Please also note At home rapid tests are not accepted. Testing must be done with a trained medical provider. Canton Board of Health hosts weekly testing clinics as well as flu and covid vaccinations clinics. Please see the site here- [Canton Board of Health testing and Vaccination Clinics](#)

Vaccines

If your student, 12 and older, has been vaccinated. If you can please send in documentation. This is important to know as they will not have to test or quarantine if there is a positive case. I will update their health record.

Masks

Masks should cover an individual's nose and mouth. Masks with valves or vents are not recommended by the CDC. For more information about appropriate mask use, please see: [Masks](#)

Reminders

As a reminder, if your child presents with any new symptoms of cold or illness, it is important to keep them home. Here is the symptom list:

COVID-19 symptoms list:

- **Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills**

- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- **Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)**
- Sore throat, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea when in combination with other symptoms
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

Where can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

- DESE and DPH strongly recommend any eligible students or staff receive the vaccine.
- For **CVS Pharmacy** locations offering the vaccine please click [HERE](#).
- For **Walgreens Pharmacy** locations offering the vaccine please click [HERE](#).
- For other Massachusetts COVID-19 vaccination sites please click [HERE](#)

Health screenings

Health screenings for students will begin in the month of October. If you do not wish for your child to be screened, please email the School Nurse, Tara.Medeiros@sjscanton.org

Physicals Due

Physical exams dated after August 1, 2020 are due for grades preschool, Pre-K, Kindergarten, Grades 4 and 7. If you can please drop off or email them. Thank you!