



# COVID-19 Testing in Schools Program

## Why is COVID-19 testing being done at schools?

To help prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2 to protect students, families, and staff, and help schools to operate safely for in person learning.

## With vaccines now available, is testing still necessary?

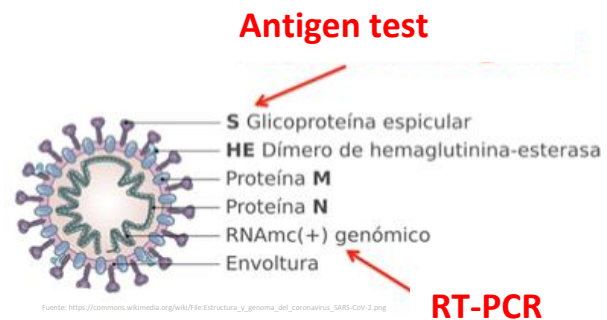
Yes. Many of the students are not yet able to get the vaccine, because it is only available to people 12 and older. Therefore, COVID-19 testing is an important way to protect our school community.

## What kind of COVID-19 tests will be used at school?



Rapid antigen tests for COVID-19 will be used. These tests detect proteins that are specific for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and can give results within 15 minutes. The quick turnaround of testing results helps take quick action to keep it from spreading in the schools.

In some instances, a student or staff member will need to be referred to take an additional type of COVID-19 test, which is called a RT-PCR test. RT-PCR tests detect the genetic material (RNA) that is specific to COVID-19. A PCR test can detect the virus within days of infection and is generally more reliable than a rapid antigen test, even for people who are not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. PCR test results can take 2-3 days as the tests are analyzed in a laboratory. This test is necessary when a student or staff member test positive for COVID-19 using a rapid antigen test.



## Why participate in the testing program?

Participation in the testing program along with vaccination as soon as eligible, mask use, physical distancing, improved classroom ventilation, handwashing, staying home when sick, contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, and cleaning and disinfection of school facilities will build a strong defense against the spread of COVID-19 and keep schools as safe as possible for in-person learning.

