

Bedford Public Schools

Philip Conrad Superintendent of Schools
Tricia Clifford, Ed. D. Assistant Superintendent of Schools



97 McMahon Road
Bedford, MA 01730

TEL: 781-275-7588
FAX: 781-275-0885

www.bedfordps.org

August 20, 2021

COVID Safety Checks (formerly referred to as Pooled Testing)

Bedford has applied and has been accepted into the 2021-2022 COVID 19 Testing Program. We will be working with CIC to offer free weekly PCR COVID-19 testing to all students and staff.

We will be working with CIC to implement the best model for our schools. There are three components to this program:

1. **Symptomatic testing** is used when a student shows symptoms of COVID-19 during school. **As always, students should not come to school if they are feeling ill at home.** Some symptoms of the virus look identical to other illnesses like the cold or flu and this rapid test tells us whether a symptomatic student has COVID-19 or not. This is a rapid test, and we receive the results within 15 minutes.
2. **Routine COVID safety checks** minimize disruption to learning by helping us catch potential spread of the virus before it starts. Each student administers the safety check on a weekly basis samples are collected at school in groups of 5-10 individuals. The samples are grouped together at the lab and all samples in the group are tested for COVID -19 together. In almost all cases it will take less than 24 hours to receive safety check results. Students can continue to come to school while awaiting results.
3. **Test and stay** allows students who have had close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19 while at school to stay in school if the student is not showing symptoms. Instead of needing to quarantine and miss school, these students will take a daily rapid test while they remain in school as long as they are not symptomatic. Students participate in the test and stay for at least 5 days after they may have been exposed.

There will be more information coming as we get closer to the start of school. We hope that everyone will consider participating in this very important safety precaution with the goal of keeping our schools safe and open!