



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

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MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

January 2, 2021
Year of St. Joseph

Dear Catholic School Families:

Happy New Year! As a follow-up to the letter sent a few weeks ago concerning the upcoming COVID-19 testing in the orange zone, please find below the answers to many frequently asked questions prior to our return to school on January 4th. We trust this will be helpful.

Are students required to be tested prior to returning on Monday, January 4th?

Students are NOT required to be tested prior to returning to school on Monday, January 4th. However, upon their return to school, students must present either a consent form for in-school testing if they have not previously submitted one, or the attached agreement form indicating that your child will be tested privately if selected.

When will SOMOS testing begin?

In-school testing provided by SOMOS will begin the week of January 11th for schools in the Orange Zones. Private testing should be scheduled immediately upon notification of the parent by the school.

What if a student was not tested by SOMOS on November 30th?

If your child was not previously tested in school by SOMOS, they can still return for in-person learning on January 4th. However, they will be included in the first round of students during in-school testing by SOMOS or the parent can choose to test privately.

What type of test must my child receive if I test privately?

This test must be a PCR nasal swab molecular test and not a rapid test nor an antigen test. Anything other than a PCR test will NOT be accepted. Printed results must contain the following information: your child's name, the date the test was given, the type of test and the result. (Negative SARS-COV2-19 PCR Test.)

When should I take my child for a molecular PCR test if I opt for them to be tested privately?

Principals will notify you on January 7th if your child is randomly selected for the initial testing and you should schedule an appointment immediately. If not randomly selected for the initial testing, principals will notify you if your child is selected as part of the 20% or 30% to be tested in order to meet the bi-weekly requirements. You must provide the test results to the school within five to seven days from the date the test is given or your child will need to be remote pending the results of the test.

Are Pre-K/Kindergarten still subject to random testing?

Yes, New York State guidance still requires this; however, as explained in the December letter, if a parent does not want their child tested by SOMOS in school, they can submit an approved private test result.

On a final note, please also remain vigilant and be mindful of your family's exposures during the Christmas break and continue to monitor your family and children for any symptoms. We do strongly recommend that students and parents be tested before school starts if you had contact with people outside of your household over the Christmas break.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael J. Deegan
Superintendent of Schools
Archdiocese of New York