

NORTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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John A. Provost, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Nick Bernier
Business Administrator

October 8, 2021

Dear NPS community,

We are writing to update you on the COVID-19 testing procedures in the district. Yesterday afternoon, we met with CIC Health and Adecco to review the events leading to the cancellation of testing at NHS, JFK and Leeds. We decided that the best way to minimize the chances of a future cancellation was to increase staffing and spread out the testing schedule over three days. Under the new schedule, pooled testing will be conducted at NHS and Leeds on Tuesdays, at JFK and Bridge Street on Wednesdays, and at Jackson Street and Ryan Road on Thursdays. This new schedule will begin next week.

In addition to pooled testing, we will now be providing symptomatic testing in schools using the BinaxNOW Antigen test. There are **two** situations in which BinaxNOW Antigen testing is indicated. The first would be to follow up with individuals who were part of a positive pooled test to determine potential starting points for contact tracing. The second would be to screen students or staff who develop **mild symptoms of concern (see below) during the school day**. Individuals who develop **any** symptom of concern while at home should not come to school and should follow up with their primary care provider for either testing or an alternative diagnosis. Individuals who develop **significant symptoms of concern (see below) during the school day** will be sent home and may return to school upon providing a negative PCR test result to the school nurse or contact tracer as long as symptoms are resolving.

Prior consent is required for participation in both pooled and symptomatic testing. Thank you for helping to keep our schools safe for students and staff.

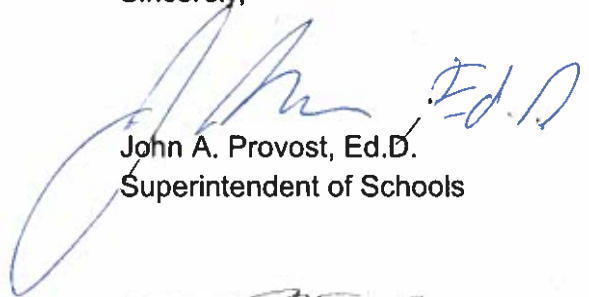
Significant symptoms of concern include:

- Fever of 100.0 or higher
- Chills
- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Loss of taste or smell

Mild symptoms of concern include:

- Headache
- Congestion, runny nose (without another documented cause, such as allergies)
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fatigue (without another known cause such as lack of sleep)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John A. Provost, Ed.D.', with a large, stylized flourish on the left side.

John A. Provost, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Safron', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Lisa Safron, BSN, RN, NCSN
Director of Health, Safety & Equity Programs