

GRAND ISLE SUPERVISORY UNION

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802-372-6921 • P.O. BOX 54, GRAND ISLE, VT 05458 • WWW.GISU.ORG

13 October 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians & Community members,

This week I'd like to highlight the 4 types of Covid 19 Testing the VT Agency of Education has recently introduced and talk about where we are with these testing types:

Surveillance Testing

GISU is very supportive of Surveillance Testing. We were one of five school districts/supervisory unions that piloted the surveillance testing of students in the spring. When the Agency of Education needed a school system to pilot the new student surveillance testing system they reached out to us and we have been doing surveillance testing since the first week of school. Testing is currently happening every Monday at the Folsom, Grand Isle, and North Hero school buildings for students and staff; and we are planning to add the Alburgh School Building soon.

Response to a Positive Case "Type 2" Testing

This is a new type of testing that is designed to help shorten the amount of time students spend in quarantine because they are identified as a close contact. With this type of testing, the GISU will set up a drive through testing opportunity for students who are identified as a close contact of a positive case in schools on the 7th day after being exposed to the positive case. Families who participate in this testing give permission and register for the testing using the same on-line portal as the weekly surveillance testing. I am pleased to share that we have successfully run one of these testing events at the Folsom School on Tuesday, October 12, 2021. Families who participated shared how quick and easy the process was.

Take Home Test Kits

This option is not yet available.

While the state announced this option, it is still in the piloting phase. These test kits are a take home PCR test which has a pre-paid mailing label. This testing option could be used for a student who is not identified in the contact tracing process but needs a negative PCR test to return to school. The eventual plan is for the state to provide the schools with a supply of these tests to distribute to families who need them when they request them. For this test, the family creates a special registration online, administers the test at home, and sends the kit to be tested using the prepaid label. The only role the school has is to distribute the kit. Please note GISU is prepared to participate in this program as soon as it is available to schools.

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Test To Stay

This option is not yet available

Test to Stay is an antigen test and is designed to help keep students who are asymptomatic and in quarantine as a close contact at school. The idea is each day the student would come to school (for 7 days) and take the antigen test before entering the building. If the test is negative the student is allowed to attend school for the day but if it comes back positive the student must return home and is considered a positive case. The logistics of this testing protocol is very significant and challenging. I have attended two sessions hosted by the VT AOE trying to figure out how to make it so we can participate in this program. We will keep you posted as we learn more and figure out the logistics of this program.

A Conversation with Dr. Althoff

At last week's community meeting, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Folsom parent Rob Althoff, MD, PhD joined the community meeting and answered questions asked by the audience. The meeting was recorded and is available to be viewed [here](#).

Community Meeting

The access to the Superintendent's weekly Community Meeting is available below. I will be talking about the 4 specific types of testing with a focus on Test to Stay. As always questions are welcome!

Wednesday, October 13, 2021, 6:00 p.m

[Join with Google Meet](https://meet.google.com/yzd-szwo-tqi) meet.google.com/yzd-szwo-tqi

[Join by phone \(US\) +1 573-349-3062](tel:+15733493062) PIN: 810 989 343#

Thank you for helping to ensure that all members of the GISU learning community are curious, creative, courageous, and capable of pursuing their aspirations in a diverse and ever changing world.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Clark

Grand Isle Supervisory Union
Superintendent