

Gardner-Dickinson School

As COVID-19 cases rise across our region and state, we continue to meet with local superintendents and our county health department to discuss these developments and ways we can continue to keep our buildings safely open.

New York State has implemented a micro-cluster strategy to designate areas with high COVID-19 infection rates as Yellow, Orange, or Red Zones, based on positivity rates and daily new cases. If a zip code, census tract or region is placed in one of those Zones, there will be restrictions for schools.

While Wynantskill UFSD is NOT currently in one of these Zones, we are working with the county and Questar III BOCES to be ready if any part of our community is labeled. Our district plans to remain open during Yellow, Orange, and Red Zones if it can comply with the state's testing requirements. Please see the chart below for the state's criteria for our county.

<p>Tier 2 RENSELAER COUNTY <i>Geographic area (ZIP, census tract, etc.) is located within a county of 150,000 or more people (and jurisdiction is not included in Tier 1).</i></p>	<p>Geographic area has 7-day rolling average positivity above 3% for 10 days</p> <p><u>AND</u></p> <p>Geographic area has 12 or more new daily cases per 100,000 residents on 7-day average</p>	<p>Geographic area has 7-day rolling average positivity above 4% for 10 days</p> <p><u>AND</u></p> <p>Geographic area has 12 or more new daily cases per 100,000 residents on 7-day average</p>	<p>Geographic area has 7-day rolling average positivity above 5% for 10 days</p> <p><u>AND</u></p> <p>Geographic area has 12 or more new daily cases per 100,000 residents on 7-day average</p>
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Screening Tests

In order for Wynantskill UFSD to remain open while in a Yellow Zone, it must commit to conducting rapid screening tests on 20 percent of the in-person students and staff over a two-week period. Students and staff members will be randomly chosen from a pool of individuals who have given consent. If Wynantskill UFSD enters an Orange Zone, we will need to continue to test new students and staff at a rate of 20 percent per month. If Wynantskill UFSD enters a Red Zone, we will need to continue to test new students and staff at a rate of 30 percent per month. The school district is preparing plans to train its school nurse in the rapid-testing protocol.

Consent Form

Just as we have asked for your continued assistance with following the new COVID-19 protocols, we would need your permission to administer tests to your children. Wynantskill UFSD will send out a test consent form in the coming days. This only applies to in-person or hybrid students. Students who are learning in a full virtual setting are not required to be tested.

Testing

The rapid test involves a non-invasive cotton swab swiping just inside the lowermost portion of the nostril. These are not the deep-sinus swab tests that are conducted at medical facilities. The test results are available within minutes. Individual test results will only be shared with families, the school nurse, and the local department of health. We will randomly choose students from a pool of individuals whose **parents have consented** to the test. If a student or staff member tests positive, they will be sent home and must stay at home until they are released by the county department of health.

Going Forward

We will provide an update if the state designates any part of our community as a cluster zone, including sharing additional information on our testing plan. Please continue to complete our daily screening form prior to sending your child to school.

As always, thank you for all that you do to support our school district. We continue to be encouraged by our community's resilience amid adversity – and flexibility and patience throughout the pandemic. We will continue to put the health and safety of our students and staff at the forefront of every decision made.