

**ELC Reopening Schools Grant:** Support grant for screening testing to reopen and keep schools operating safely.

The \$1.3million testing grant will provide 2 kinds of testing:

1. Antigen screening – this is testing done only on students and staff who are symptom-free and have no known exposure to a positive case. Results come in 15 minutes. This is most commonly done either as a routine screening for those who want it, perhaps once a week, which captures asymptomatic positive cases, or for sports teams who require it in order to compete. A positive result is immediately verified with a molecular test.
2. Rapid molecular testing – this kind of testing is done on students or staff who become ill or find out they are close contacts while at school. We use Cue and Abbot ID Now devices and results come in 15 – 20 minutes.

Every single positive and negative result has to be reported to the state. The set-up, testing, clean-up and reporting can consume a lot of time and most nurses already have a full day. Many coaches are also spending extra time testing. The Testing Grant will provide the following:

1. We will hire a testing coordinator to oversee the testing in our district. They will order the supplies, disperse them from the warehouse, conduct training, assist with testing and support, keep track of all the data and reports for our district. This will be a 40-hour a week position.
2. We will hire 14 assistants to work with the nurses in our district and provide testing in our schools. There will be one at each of the 5 major high schools and 4 major middle schools, and 5 to cover the larger elementary schools. These positions will be 7 hours per day.
3. For the schools who do not have full-time nurses, one or two staff members can be trained and paid for time spent testing.
4. There are currently free supplies available from the state. We received 40 Cue devices and 10 Abbott ID Now devices. The Cue devices have to be paired with an Ipad or Iphone, so we have purchased 40 I pads out of the grant money already. The testing cartridges are typically \$50 to \$60 per cartridge (1 cartridge = 1 test). Once the supply at the state warehouse runs out, we will need to purchase them.
5. The grant will also cover mileage and benefits.

The benefits of testing cannot be fully measured, however, the implications can easily be seen from the two following examples:

1. Antigen screening – when someone who has Covid19 does not have symptoms, they can easily spread it to others without knowing. Identifying an asymptomatic positive individual allows us to minimize spread and reduce the number of individuals affected. For sports teams, it keeps us from spreading this disease to other schools and keeps them from bringing it to our students.
2. Rapid molecular testing – if a child goes home ill, the parent can give permission to test their student. If the result is negative, the child can return when they are 24 hours symptom-free. For a child with a simple 24-hr stomach bug, they might only have to miss 2 days of school, instead of 10, and their parents won't have to find a place to take them for testing.
3. If someone finds out at school that they are a close contact and they test negative, even if they turn out positive later, we will know that no contact tracing has to be done because they weren't contagious while at school.

What these potential numbers add up to are more in-person days at school for students and staff and a safer environment for our more vulnerable populations.

Note: except for what is required for sports teams, all antigen screening and molecular testing is completely voluntary.