



October 5, 2021

Dear SPS Family:

Suffolk Public Schools is participating in the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Virginia School Screening Testing for Assurance (ViSSTA) program. To learn more about this program, please visit the [ViSSTA](#) portion of the VDH website.

An additional component of the ViSSTA program is the [eMed](#) BinaxNOW Ag Card Home Test kit. The BinaxNOW Ag Card Home Test is an antigen test that uses a nasal swab for sample collection and can return test results in about 15 minutes. This test has been authorized by the FDA under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). eMed BinaxNOW tests are to be used for diagnostic and close contact testing. These kits will be available, while supplies last, to teachers, staff, and/or students providing, supporting, or attending in-person instruction who begin exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 while at school or who are identified as close contacts to a known case of COVID-19. Students/teachers/staff who begin experiencing [symptoms](#) while at home should **stay home** and seek testing in the community. **Please do not come to school if you are ill/symptomatic.**

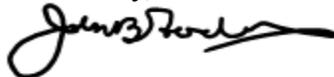
The test kit will be sent home with the symptomatic staff member or the parent/guardian of a symptomatic student when the student is picked up from school and the telehealth session will be conducted at home. Likewise, students/teachers/staff who have been identified as a close contact to a COVID-19 positive individual will be sent home with test kits to conduct the telehealth session at home. eMed home test kits are provided as an extension of the ViSSTA program and are not intended for use as a routine screening tool. Use of the kits is voluntary, if you do not plan to use the kit please do not take one so that it can be made available to another individual in need of testing. **It is important that test kits remain unopened until the test taker is directed to open the kit by a Certified Guide in an eMed telehealth session. To maintain the integrity of the process, eMed will not proctor a session using an opened test kit.**

eMed will document the test results. Positive test results will be reported by eMed to VDH as required by law. Negative tests will be reported in the aggregate to VDH by school and school division. The tested individual will also receive a copy of their result electronically. Please report a positive test result to the nurse at your child's school as soon as possible. At this time, a negative test result does not reduce the length of quarantine for a close contact, it remains at 14 days from last exposure. Kits being used by close contacts may aid in identifying asymptomatic or presymptomatic COVID-19 positive individuals - helping to direct next steps and reduce further spread. Suffolk Public Schools will continue to monitor data and work closely with our local health department to determine if/when a reduced length of quarantine is advisable.

Home Testing Kit Letter  
October 5, 2021  
Page 2

More information and instructions will be provided with the individual kits. We are excited about this opportunity and see it as another useful tool in stopping the spread of COVID-19. Our commitment remains first and foremost to the health and safety of our students and staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. Gordon III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. John B. Gordon III  
*Division Superintendent*