

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND STAFF ABOUT COVID-19 TESTING

The **purpose** of the testing program is to not only protect all of our students but also to protect their parents, grandparents and community members with whom they interact. Since symptoms of Covid-19 often do not show up until days after infection, it is likely that testing would identify the virus in asymptomatic individuals before they have an opportunity to infect others.

Key points of the program:

1) The false positive rate is virtually 0 (zero). This means that if a test is positive, the individual has Covid-19. **If someone does not have Covid-19, they will not test positive.**

2) **The test is for the virus.** Antibody testing is not being done. Testing is being done using a **nasal swab**, which is like a Q-Tip into the tip of the nose. It may tickle a little, but it causes no pain. It is *NOT* the deeper, more uncomfortable nasopharyngeal swab. **Dozens of children, including young children, have already been tested with the nasal swab and there have been no significant complaints.**

3) Keeping the risk of COVID-19 transmission low allows our schools, restaurants and businesses to stay open and allows people to remain employed. **This benefits the entire community.**

4) **Covid-19 is present in our community as evidenced by a recent cluster of cases, including at least 1 case at a school.** Regular, weekly COVID testing increases the likelihood of keeping our schools open because if there is a positive test, only a few individuals will need to isolate instead of shutting down the entire school. **Thus, the chances your child would need to return to virtual learning from home is minimized.**

5) Medical science is clear: 40% or more of adults and children with COVID-19 may have no symptoms and not know they have the virus. **Adults and children with no symptoms can spread the virus to loved ones, friends, and others without knowing it.**

6) **Pisgah Legal Services** has access to **cost-free** emergency financial assistance for families in need due to Covid-19, including rental assistance to avoid eviction or for other essential needs. Call 253-0406 or 1-800-489-6144 and specify the need. *One's immigration status does not matter.*

Other resources for financial assistance:

Federal Assistance - Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) - if you or a dependent test positive with COVID-19 and need to isolate or become unemployed. Please follow this link to use the FFCRA tool <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/ffcra/benefits-eligibility-webtool>: “This new tool makes it simple for workers to find out if they may be eligible for paid sick leave or extended family and medical leave under the critical protections of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act,” said Wage and Hour Division Administrator Cheryl Stanton. “As America reopens, this leave provides a crucial lifeline for millions of workers who need time off to care for themselves or their families. We want to ensure that everyone who is eligible knows about these protections and how to use them.”

Another helpful site to visit for more **COVID-19 employment related questions** is: <https://joinhomebase.com/blog/financial-resources-for-workers-affected-by-covid-19/>

We would also like to remind everyone that September through November is the time to get your **flu shot**. The flu shot is the single best thing one can do to prevent a serious flu infection, and reduce the risk of other infections, including Covid-19.