



Erie 1 BOCES Instructional Services

Alternative Education | Career and Technical Education | Special Education

December 4, 2020

Dear Erie 1 BOCES Family,

Governor Cuomo recently announced new testing guidelines for schools to return to in-person learning in the Orange and Red Zones. Full details *have not* been released, but in his press conference the Governor stated the following:

- Orange Zone schools require testing 20% of in-person students and staff over one month.
- Red Zone schools require testing 30% of in-person students and staff over one month.
- Testing can be accomplished on a rolling, weekly basis for schools in the Orange and Red Zones.

We recognize that in-person learning is a critical component in meeting the needs of our students and families and we look forward to a safe and successful return to the hybrid learning model. That said, a return to in-person hybrid learning is contingent upon our ability to meet the testing requirements and appropriately staff our schools and classroom.

Since shifting to the fully remote learning model on November 23, Erie 1 BOCES has been actively planning to deploy rapid COVID-19 testing for students and staff across all of our programs and services. The following summarizes our most recent efforts to date:

- Under the direction and supervision of our medical director, Erie 1 BOCES has been approved to operate as a Limited Service Laboratory (LSL) from the NYS Department of Health. Appropriate staff have been identified and trained to administer the test.
- We have received over 2,000 BinaxNow COVID Ag Rapid Tests for immediate distribution. BinaxNow is a non-invasive nasal swab. It is performed very quickly, and results take 15 minutes to process.
- Testing sites will be made available at Erie 1 BOCES' three, Career and Technical Education Centers:
 - *Central Location* Harkness, 99 Aero Drive, Cheektowaga, NY 14225
 - *Northtowns Location* Kenton Center, 151 Two Mile Creek Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150
 - *Southtowns Location* Potter Center, 705 Potters Road, West Seneca, NY 14224

In an effort to meet the testing requirements, students and staff will be asked to volunteer for rapid testing. **The schedule for testing will be announced as soon as we receive guidance from the NYS Department of Health and in cooperation with our component partner Districts.** In preparation for staff and student testing, please consider giving your [Consent to Test here](#).

We appreciate your continued support and patience. Our teachers, support staff and building leaders are committed to provide students with a safe, engaging and meaningful educational experience.

Sincerely,

Erie 1 BOCES' Instructional Team

Michael Capuana, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services

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