

K-12 Quarantine Alternative Pilot Program SOP

Keeping K-12 students in school, in-person five days a week, is vital as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to surge in Ohio's communities. In-person learning is very important for children's development. When school districts follow layered prevention strategies including vaccination for staff and eligible students, requiring masks, and social distancing, it helps slow the spread of the virus and allows students to stay in school consistently.

The Quarantine Alternative Pilot is being conducted in conjunction with the Warren County Combined Health District and 10 school districts in Warren, Butler and Clinton counties with technical assistance from the Ohio Department of Health. It provides an alternative to at-home quarantine for students who are direct contacts of a positive case. This pilot uses mask wearing and frequent testing to keep healthy students in school and keep sick students at home.

Isolation and quarantine have been used by public health for decades. The purpose of isolation and quarantine is to identify people who are sick or who have been exposed to someone who is sick and keep them from spreading the virus to others by limiting their contacts.

Definitions

Person with COVID-19

The student who is medically diagnosed with COVID-19. If the person is at school, they should be sent home immediately and follow appropriate isolation procedures as directed by the local health department. This student should not come to school or participate in extracurricular activities.

Direct Contacts for the Pilot Program

Direct contacts for COVID-19 are those individuals who are identified as being directly exposed to a person with COVID-19; within 6 feet for cumulative 15 minutes or more within a 24-hour period of time. In schools the definition excludes students who were between 3 to 6 feet of an infected student if the exposed student correctly and consistently wore a mask. Fully vaccinated students are not identified as direct contacts.

Standard K-12 Quarantine

The student will quarantine at home for 10 days from the date of last exposure. Families have the choice to test their child, using a PCR or antigen test on or after day 5. If the test is negative and the child remains symptom free, they can return to school on day 8. Parents and students will monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for a full 14 days after the date of last exposure.

Pilot Program Eligibility

Students that meet the following criteria are eligible for the program:

1. Student meets the direct contact definition above
2. Student does not have COVID-19 symptoms

K-12 Quarantine Alternative Pilot Program

A student identified as a direct contact has the option to participate in the K-12 Quarantine Alternative Pilot Program. Families who opt into the pilot program will adhere to the following requirements to allow their child or children to continue to attend school:

1. Anyone who tests positive or becomes symptomatic should stay home and follow isolation protocols for at least 10 days from onset of symptoms OR from positive test, whichever occurred first.
2. Students who opt into the pilot program and remain in school, must wear a mask indoors for at least seven days after last exposure and must maintain a minimum of three feet distance from others. The mask must be a multi-layer surgical style mask or equivalent that fits snugly over the nose and mouth. Schools may assist in supplying multi-layer surgical masks to students who opt in.
3. The student participating in the pilot will take a COVID-19 test following school testing protocols for COVID-19 twice during the seven days following exposure.
 - a. The first test will be given immediately upon identification that the student is a direct contact of a positive case after the consent form is completed by the parent or guardian.
 - b. The second test will be conducted on days five to seven after the last day of exposure.
4. Schools should provide a separate area to dine where physical distancing of six feet is maintained for the pilot participant. This will allow the participant to safely unmask while eating.
5. Each test must be negative for the student to remain in school.
6. The student must remain symptom-free to remain in school.
7. If the student tests positive, does not wear a mask, or becomes symptomatic during the seven-day period, they will no longer be eligible for the program and will quarantine or isolate at home based on current Warren County Combined Health District requirement. If a student is exposed again to COVID-19 through direct contact with an individual with COVID-19 after testing out of their participation in the initial pilot quarantine period, the student will be required to restart the pilot quarantine protocols. If the student tests positive during the pilot program they will begin the positive COVID-19 isolation period.
8. During the quarantine period, the student cannot participate in extracurricular activities.
9. When the student is not in school, they must quarantine at home.
10. Students and parents will monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after the date of last exposure.

Pilot Program School Testing Protocol

The K-12 Quarantine Alternative Pilot Program requires eligible students to test twice during the seven-day pilot program. The seven-day period begins on the day following direct contact exposure to a positive case of COVID-19. The Abbott BinaxNow Rapid Antigen Test will be used in this pilot program.

Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen Home Test Kit

The Home Test Kit provides one rapid antigen test for COVID-19 to be used at home with a telehealth provider. All families using the home test kit should follow the Ohio Department of Health User Guide: [Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Home Test Kit – User Guide](#)

Procedures for administering the At-Home Test Kit:

1. The school will provide two Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Home Test kits to students who qualify for the pilot program.
2. The school will provide two testing dates to the student and parent or guardian:
 - a. The first test will be conducted as soon as the school is able upon knowledge of exposure to the positive case.
 - b. The second test will be conducted on days 5-7 after exposure.
3. For each test, the student's parent or guardian will login or create a NAVICA account, including managed profiles for each person who is participating in the pilot program.
4. Parents or guardians will go to ohio.emed.com to start the testing process.
5. Parents will follow the instructions provided by eMed and administer the test under the guidance of the eMed telehealth provider/proctor.
6. eMed will verify test results and explain the results of the test.
7. If the test result is positive, the information will be provided to the local health department and the student must not return to school until no longer infectious, as advised by the local health department.
8. Test results are emailed to the parent/guardian and are available on the NAVICA app.
9. The parent or guardian will provide a copy of the test results to the school.
10. Schools will verify and track student participation and test results.
11. Schools will report any positive cases to the local health department as they are made aware of the positive test result.

Tests performed without a telehealth visit do NOT satisfy testing requirements of the K-12 Alternative Quarantine Pilot Program.

Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen In-school Professional Test Kit

The In-school Test Kit is designed to be administered on-site by a trained professional. The school is responsible for obtaining CLIA laboratory waivers, provider orders for tests, and reporting the results to local authorities.

1. Schools will provide the following:
 - a. On-site testing location
 - b. Test administrator
 - c. Validation and reporting of test results to local authorities
2. The student process may vary for each school but will include:
 - a. The first test will be conducted on the first available testing time after knowledge of exposure to the positive case and after the consent form is completed by the parent or/ guardian.
 - b. The student is administered a second test on days 5-7 five to seven of the last exposure.
 - c. Schools will verify and track student participation and test results.

- d. If the test result is positive, the information will be provided to the local health department and the student must not return to school until no longer infectious, as advised by the local health department.
- e. During this period, the student should be monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 for a full 14 days.

Program Completion

If both tests are negative and the student follows all guidelines as outlined in the K-12 Quarantine Alternative Program, the student will remain in school throughout the program duration. On day eight, following the last day of exposure, the student should default to the school's masking policy. If the student remains symptom free, their participation in the program is complete and they may return to a non-quarantined status.

Data Reporting

Participating schools will report the following pilot data to the Warren County Combined Health District and ODH every Monday for prior week (M-F):

1. Number of students meeting Direct Contact quarantine criteria.
2. Number of students choosing Standard K-12 Quarantine.
3. Number of students who opt into the K-12 Quarantine Alternative Pilot Program.
4. Number of students who test positive at first test during the seven days following last exposure.
5. Number of students who test positive at the second test during the seven days following last exposure.
6. Number of students who complete the K-12 Quarantine Alternative Pilot Program.
7. Number of students participating in the program, who became a direct contact again through exposure to another person with COVID-19. (multiple exposures)
8. Total number of students in the school by grade level
9. Data should be reported on a weekly basis by Monday, following the cadence of COVID-19 case count reporting for schools reporting to the dashboard

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH), in collaboration with the participating schools and the Warren County Combined Health District, shall promptly evaluate pilot data to assess the effectiveness of the program by looking for trends in case counts, outbreaks, conversion among contacts, and mitigation of disease spread, thereby allowing more children to attend school and activities safely. ODH may, upon analysis of pilot data, update or revise quarantine guidance for K-12 schools.