

Cheektowaga-Sloan Union Free School District

Mrs. Andrea L. Galenski
Superintendent of Schools
(716) 891-6402



Board of Education
Denise McCowan - President
Claire M. Ferrucci - Vice President
Stephanie Dombrowski
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Gary Sieczkarek
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February 9, 2022

Dear Cheektowaga-Sloan Community,

I am writing to provide an update with regard to masking in schools and free COVID-19 home tests that are available to our families.

Today, Governor Hochul announced that the state will be ending the COVID-19 mask mandate tomorrow for most indoor public settings. However, she indicated that this **does not** include schools at this time. She will be revisiting the question of whether to continue requiring masks in schools the first week in March. The Governor shared that it was important for her to wait on the decision about masking in schools until children have returned from the mid-winter recess.

Since the Governor feels strongly about waiting to make this important decision for schools, she has once again distributed COVID-19 tests to school districts as she did during the December break. Her hope is that families will be able to pick up these home tests and test their children prior to returning to school after the mid-winter recess.

Our District is prepared to provide each student with one box of COVID-19 tests. Each box contains two tests. It is important to share that these tests may be voluntarily used by parents to test their children before they return to school on Monday, February 28th. If your child tests positive, he/she is to stay home and isolate. For all positive cases, please contact your school nurse and reference the COVID-19 page on our website for more details on how to report the case to the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH).

If your child is *symptomatic and tests negative*, he/she will need to stay home from school. Your child can return to school in one of the following ways: 1) Stay home for five days after the symptoms began with the first day of symptoms being day zero OR 2) Provide a doctor's note stating the symptoms are due to another condition (not COVID); OR 3) Get an antigen or PCR test at a laboratory and share the results with your school nurse (home tests are not accepted to return to school after illness).

Please know that these COVID-19 tests are voluntary; however, we hope that you will consider testing your child before returning to school on Monday, February 28th. This will enable us to continue providing the safest learning environment possible. We appreciate all of your efforts to help us maintain daily in-person instruction during this time.

If you are interested in picking up a COVID-19 test, we have arranged the following pick-up dates and times for your convenience:

166 Halstead Avenue • Sloan, New York 14212-2295 • www.cheektowagasloan.org

Our mission is to provide a positive academic and social learning environment that fosters independence, responsibility, life-long learning and student success.

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Wednesday, February 16th from 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m: Tests can be picked up at Woodrow Wilson during this time. You can drive through the bus loop in the back of the school and receive your free COVID-19 test without even having to park your vehicle. Staff will provide you with a COVID-19 test as you pull up.

Friday, February 18th from 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m: Tests can be picked up at Woodrow Wilson at your convenience during these hours. You do not need to call the school or make an appointment. We will have staff ready to provide tests during these scheduled hours. You can drive through the bus loop in the back of the school and receive your free COVID-19 test without even having to park your vehicle. Staff will provide you with a COVID-19 test as you pull up.

Please note: If you receive a CareStart COVID-19 box of tests labeled with a February 2022 expiration date, AccessBio has extended the shelf-life until May 31, 2022. These tests are still valid and reliable.

We hope that you will take advantage of picking up these free COVID-19 tests. We are just so appreciative of how much our community has been patient, has worked with us as true partners, and how together, we have worked so hard to ensure the health and safety of everyone here.

We continue to recognize the mixed feelings that our community has about wearing masks and we want you to know how we value and respect the varied feelings around this issue. We look forward to hearing what the Governor's decision is in just a few short weeks from now. Once the decision is made, please know that I will share the information as soon as it becomes available so that our community is informed and can prepare for whatever that decision may be.

Thank you so much for being such a tremendous community in Cheektowaga-Sloan.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. Galenski