



Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc.
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President, PHILIP RUMORE

October 25, 2021

MEMO TO: Dr. Kriner Cash, Superintendent, BPS
FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF
RE: Mandating COVID-19 Testing – Demand to Negotiate Impact

We are in receipt of the enclosed correspondence from the District “Requirement for COVID-19 Testing for Teachers and other School Employees - with Opt-Out for Vaccinated”.

We thought you would have provided more notice. It has also led to confusion.

The correspondence states, “Starting the week of November 5, 2021, there will be an online portal available where staff are required to either; 1. Upload COVID-19 vaccination verification information, or 2. Upload weekly testing results.” (Emphasis added). This has led to much confusion as November 5, 2021 is a Friday.

The correspondence then later states, “The deadline to provide vaccination verification using the district on line portal is November 5, 2021.” (Emphasis added).

Please consider this correspondence as our Demand to Negotiate the impact of the District’s “Requirement for COVID-19 Testing for Teachers and other School Employees”.

For items such as, but not limited to:

- Payment for any charges for testing not covered by teacher’s insurance. Note: The District has received ample funding to cover this.
- Release time to be tested.
- Testing available in all schools.
- Testing at any time the teacher has no assigned duty, e.g. before/after school.
- No penalty for testing/vaccination information not being made available through no fault of teacher’s or the timing of this notification.
- The District will certify that all HIPAA and other Laws/Regulations will be followed to protect a teacher’s privacy rights.

Since the District has chosen to implement this directive within the next two (2) weeks, we seek negotiations on this immediately.

We have been notified by teachers that the nurse at their school has advised them that there is often only enough tests for thirty percent (30%) of those to be tested and that at some schools, supplies have been exhausted at times.

This obviously needs to be corrected immediately.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this very important matter.

PR:su

From: Warren, Jamie <JWarren@buffaloschools.org>

Sent: Friday, October 22, 2021 3:08 PM

To: District Users <District_Users@BuffaloSchools.org>

Subject: School Employees Requirement for COVID-19 Testing - With Opt-Out for Vaccinated

Requirement for COVID-19 Testing for Teachers and other School Employees— with Opt-Out for Vaccinated

NYS Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Department of Health released official guidance for in-person classroom instruction. The guidance prioritizes in-person learning and details recommendations and requirements for vaccinations, wearing face masks, implementing physical distancing measures, and COVID-19 surveillance testing to mitigate potential transmission spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The emergency regulation authorizes the Commissioner of Health to require weekly testing or proof of being fully vaccinated and applies to all schools in New York State until it is no longer necessary as described in the language of the regulation. Detailed information on the regulation can be found at <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-new-requirements-and-guidance-safe-reopening-new-york-schools>

Buffalo Public School Procedures

According to the mandate, school staff must provide the District with proof of vaccination, or weekly test results.

Online Portal

Starting the week of November 5, 2021, there will be an online portal available where staff are required to either;

1. Upload COVID-19 vaccination verification information, or
2. Upload weekly testing results

Weekly Testing Requirement

It is the unvaccinated staff member's responsibility to submit weekly testing results through the online portal. School staff cannot rely on receiving their weekly COVID-19 surveillance test at their respective schools. If available, COVID-19 testing in schools may only be accessed during either lunch or planning period.

Find a Test Site Near You -

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>

Testing for COVID-19 is widely available throughout New York State. Individuals who have questions about COVID-19 testing should call the New York State COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-364-3065 or visit the NYSDOH website. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, please call the testing site or your health care provider before you go for testing.

Deadline

The deadline to provide vaccination verification using the district on line portal is November 5, 2021.

Starting the week of November 8, 2021, staff who have not demonstrated that they are fully vaccinated will have to upload weekly testing information via the district online portal.

COVID Resources and Protocols

- Safety & Protection Protocols:

<https://www.buffaloschools.org/cms/lib/NY01913551/Centricity/Domain/4416/2021-2022%20Plan%20Addendum.pdf>

- Information & Resources for Staff <https://www.buffaloschools.org/Page/97232>
- Daily Report & Dashboard <https://www.buffaloschools.org/coronavirus>

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“Every good conversation starts with listening.” – Tom Haak