



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**TO:** Board of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent of Schools

**RE:** Covid-19 Surveillance and Screening Test Recommendation

**DATE:** February 9, 2021

## **RECOMMENDATION**

In light of the district’s efforts to prioritize the health and safety of our students and staff as a part of our hybrid learning plan, we are recommending the implementation of the following COVID-19 surveillance and screening plan as an added layer of our infectious control strategies.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The district has researched two companies to provide surveillance and screening testing. A summary of each company is provided below (for further details, please see pages :

|                                 | <b>Northshore Clinical Labs (NCL)</b>                    | <b>Safeguard</b>     |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| <b>Type of test</b>             | PCR-”Gold Standard”                                      | Saliva-RT-LAMP       |
| <b>Cost</b>                     | No cost to D97   | \$11/test            |
| <b>Logistics</b>                | Little to no impact                                      | High impact-staffing |
| <b>Actionable Data</b>          | No   | Yes                  |
| <b>Mandatory testing option</b> | No   | Yes                  |
| <b>Contract</b>                 | Optional ( <i>see note on page 3</i> )                   | Yes                  |
| <b>Results returned in</b>      | 24-48 hours (more advanced test and thus has more steps) | Less than 24-hours   |

During the regularly scheduled BOE meeting on February 9, the administration will answer questions related to the following recommendation:

- We recommend conducting a six-week surveillance and screening testing pilot as an added layer to our infectious control strategies. (*Please note: This isn’t a required precaution; rather, we want to provide additional reassurance to our staff and families.*)
- We recommend Northshore Clinical Labs (NCL) to test staff.
- We recommend Safeguard Surveillance to test students.
- Initially, we would like to begin with just our middle school students who attend school onsite.

- If the pilot goes well, we will consider expanding the pilot to also include our onsite K-5 students. *(The company has the capacity to test up to 2,000 students weekly.)*

The estimated costs for this six-week pilot is approximately \$25,000. The estimated breakdown of costs is outlined below:

- **Safeguard Surveillance Testing:** initially, 330 students @ \$11/test over six weeks: \$21,780
- **Surveillance Testing Logistics Assistant:** \$25/hour, estimating 15 hours per week: \$2,250
- **Transport/Courier Cost:** \$31/week over 6 weeks: \$186

*(If we expand the pilot to include students in grades K-5, the estimated cost of the pilot could go as high as \$135,000.)*

This recommendation was made based upon the engagement of the following stakeholder groups:

- On Monday, February 1, I conducted a focus group of four nurses, four principals, and several administrators (including James Hackett, Safety and Security Manager; and Gina Herrmann, Senior Director of Human Resources).
- On Tuesday, February 2, I consulted with a local pediatrician (non-affiliated with D97) and the Vice President of Operations for Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group (also a member of D200's safety planning team).
- On Thursday, February 4, I consulted with our 10 building principals.
- *(Due to time constraints, on Tuesday, February 2, I was only able to share with all presidents of our associations (excluding SEIU) that a recommendation would be made.)*

It should be noted that this plan is a luxury, not a required precaution. Once again, in light of our district's efforts to prioritize the health and safety of our students and staff, we would like to layer surveillance or screening testing to the host of other infectious control strategies already in place in our 10 school buildings and administration building. Our intention is to give our staff and families additional reassurance about their safety.

A summary of information is included on the following pages. If you have any questions on anything I shared in this memo, please email or call me prior to our next meeting.

## **Northshore Clinical Labs (Albany Park-Lawrence and Kedzie)**

### **Overview**

Northshore Clinical Labs (NCL) is a high capacity molecular lab that can provide diagnostic PCR testing. Early in the pandemic, they were contacted by IDPH to offer their testing services to long-term care facilities. Over the past 3-4 months, they have expanded and are now offering testing services to pretty much anyone that needs them. They recently started testing for Chicago City Colleges.

### **Cost**

According to the company, there is no cost to District 97. The lab registers each patient directly and bills their insurance accordingly.

### **Results**

Results are shared directly with the patient and are available in 24-48 hours. All of their testing equipment is registered with IDPH. If a significant spike in testing were to occur, test results could be delayed due to supply chain issues. A delay in reporting results did occur back in November (as it did with other providers), but the NCL representative stated they remedied the issue and there should be no issues with reporting, even during those elevated testing cycles.

Important to note that since this solution is an agreement between the patient and provider, District 97 would not be notified of positive results. Those results, positive or negative, are sent directly to IDPH according to public health laws. So, we would still be on a self-reporting platform for anyone who tests positive.

### **Staff Testing**

They can offer onsite testing for staff at all of our locations. We would need to provide them with the number of people being tested, and they would staff accordingly. They have no problem with collecting 700 staff samples from across the 10 schools and the district office. The recommendation for staff testing is once per week, and the process could be operational in a matter of days. This would be a voluntary option for those staff members who would like to participate.

### **Reference Checks**

There was a social media push that strongly recommended not using NCL for testing. Much of this centers around an issue that occurred in November and centered around access to timely results. We took this concern very seriously, and immediately contacted NCL, advised them what was going on, and asked them to respond. Shortly thereafter, a representative shared a transparent and detailed response, which included several references. We followed up with these individuals and shared their responses with the board in January.

### **Agreement**

For the onsite staff testing, no agreement would be needed. If the BOE feels there needs to be a contract in place to reference privacy issues, that could be put into place.

## **Safeguard Surveillance, LLC**

### **Overview**

Safeguard offers a saliva-based test. Here is a link to some slides that discuss some of the aspects of their offering: [Safeguard Surveillance Saliva Testing for Schools](#). This is the test that is being offered at OPRF High School, New Trier, River Forest, Glenview and several other districts.

### **Cost**

Each test (staff or student) costs \$11. Here is a link to a spreadsheet that breaks down the costs: [Safeguard Surveillance Testing Costs](#)

### **Logistics**

The logistical impact on the district is high. We would have to designate staff to print labels, affix labels to tubes, package tubes into envelopes, and distribute the envelopes. Then, once the samples are dropped off, we would have to collect them and deliver them to the LaGrange lab by 9:00 am Sunday morning. The designated staff person would then need to work with our school nurses so they can contact the families of students who have presumptive positive test results. The goal is to prevent students with presumptive positive test results from attending school onsite until after their quarantine period has ended.

### **Results**

Results will be returned Sunday evening. All samples will be coded with a number to maintain confidentiality. Staff will have to scan the barcode, identify who the person is and make contact with them. Any presumptive positive results will require follow up by district personnel. This follow up will need to take place on Sunday evening so that families can be notified of the presumptive positive and provide guidance on how to proceed.

### **Actionable Data**

We recommend that this test be mandatory for students that participate in onsite hybrid learning.