

Dear Petrides School Community,

As the year has gotten underway, we are seeing how being back in the school building has done so much good for so many of your children. It has been amazing to witness your children reconnect with their peers and teachers.

I wanted to share an important update on COVID-19 testing in our school. As you may be aware, the State launched a cluster action initiative to mitigate higher than average COVID-19 transmission in communities around the state. Per the State's zone designations, our school is determined to be located in a geographic area identified as a "precautionary zone" ("yellow zone") as announced by the State on Wednesday, November 11. Schools in these zones are safe to be open while COVID-19 transmission rates are being carefully monitored in these areas. You can find a map of the yellow zone, as well as other specially designated zones, [here](#).

Because our school is located in a precautionary/yellow zone, our school will have mandatory weekly COVID-19 testing for a random sample of students and staff as required by the State for schools located in these zones. The transmission data for COVID-19 in the area around our school will continue to be closely monitored; should any change in operating status be needed, we will let you know immediately.

Keeping our building open depends on random COVID-19 testing of our students and staff, which means that we need a consent form from you providing permission for your child to be tested for COVID-19. Even if you have already provided a consent form, please see the information below to ensure we have an updated form on file, which is necessary for our school. Like so much during this pandemic, the need for testing, and permission to test, is so different from what we are used to. I can reassure you that completing the consent form is in the best interest of your children and our school community.

To ensure our compliance with State requirements, we need to ensure we have the most recent consent form for your child. Even if you have already sent it in, if it was before October 15, we need a new one that reflects Yellow Zone weekly testing. So I am asking you to please submit an updated consent form for your child. We need this if your child is currently participating in blended learning, or if you are opting into blended learning for the remainder of the school year. Here is important information, and how to submit consent:

- The test is quick and safe. More than 60,000 students have already been tested across the city. The testing process entails swabbing (similar to a Q-tip) the anterior nasal area/frontal part of the nose. The swab length may vary but only a small portion is inserted into the front part of the nose for five to ten seconds.
- All testing-related data, info, and results are confidential and protected by strict City, State, and federal laws. COVID-19 tests will not be used to collect any DNA or other genetic information about you and/or your child.

- A sample of students, with consent forms on file, and staff will be tested each week. So if your child is selected one week, they may or may not also be tested the following week.
- Even after we receive your consent, your child will not be tested if they are uncomfortable or become distressed at any point during the process. If that happens, we will work with you to address any potential concerns so that your child is comfortable participating in future testing.
- If your child is tested at school, information about the testing process, and when and how you will receive the results, will be sent home with your child. Most testing results will be available within 48 hours.

There are two easy methods to provide your consent right away:

- **Online:** Fill out the form online using a New York City Schools Account (NYCSA). Go to mystudent.nyc.gov. Below you can find instructions on how to create a NYCSA account.
- **Paper Form:** Fill out and return the paper form to school. We have included the updated consent form with this letter. Your school can print and provide this form to you, or you can print it at home and send in with your child on their next in-person blended learning day. A printable PDF file is available in ten languages at schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting.

You can find additional information under Frequently Asked Questions at schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting and also call the NYC Test and Trace Corps' hotline at 212-COVID.

Thank you for your partnership and your continuing commitment to keeping our school community safe and healthy. We are here for you.

Sincerely,

Joanne Buckheit
Principal

HOW TO CREATE A NYCSA ACCOUNT

If you already have a NYCSA account linked to your student(s): Log in, click your student's name, click "Manage Account," and then when a dropdown menu appears, click "Consent Forms." Read the page, and then choose the consent option at the end for your student.

If you do not already have a NYCSA account: You can create one right away! If you have an account creation code from your school, you can create a full account in approximately five minutes, and then provide consent as described above. If you do not have an account creation code from your school, you can still provide your consent right away by clicking

“Manage Consent” under “COVID-19 Testing” and filling out your and your child’s information to provide consent.