

Philip Qualman

Superintendent
philip.qualman@eagleschools.net



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Eagle County Schools signed up for BinaxNOW program

State to provide rapid home testing kits for COVID-19 to educators

Eagle, CO – Eagle County Schools announced today that it has registered to participate in the state’s new BinaxNOW rapid home testing program for schools. Colorado is one of three states to provide participating school districts with [BinaxNOW](#) testing kits. The cost of the first month’s worth of testing kits will be covered by the state, with cost-sharing on subsequent months still to be determined.

How it works

The BinaxNOW testing kit contains enough cards and swabs for individuals to conduct a test at home every five days. Individuals follow testing instructions via a proctored virtual telehealth session to swab their nose, add a reagent to the card, and fold the card around the swab. Results are known within 15 minutes. The kit is also paired with a smartphone app, NAVICA, that will allow people who test negative to have a temporary encrypted digital health pass via a QR code – like an airline ticket. The digital pass renews each time the person has a negative test. If positive, the app instructs the person to quarantine and call their doctor. Currently, staff self-report symptoms each day before work. The BinaxNOW test will be more accurate and also detects asymptomatic cases.

Why it’s important

The BinaxNOW rapid home testing kits will help school districts and educators feel more confident in the safety of learning environments. If used consistently and broadly among staff, the weekly testing confirms health and more quickly identifies positive cases so that they can quarantine sooner and reduce the risk of having close contact with others. The test works for those who are symptomatic, allowing them to identify positivity at the first onset of symptoms and seek available therapeutic care through their healthcare provider. For staff instructed to quarantine due to close contact with a positive case, a negative test after the fifth day of exposure can help them return to work sooner than the full quarantine period.

When it’s available

Distribution details from the state are forthcoming. The school district has registered as a program participant and plans to make the test available to all staff members who are interested in the program. The program will be optional and on a voluntary basis.

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Eagle County Schools thanks the state level Roadmap to In-person Learning task force, which includes local Public Health Director Heath Harmon, for working with the Governor to provide this important and essential tool for our staff members.

“I’m excited about the BinaxNOW program,” said Superintendent Philip Qualman. “Reaffirming that you’re negative every five days can reduce fear and anxiety among our staff. This tool, combined with forthcoming vaccines, create a very positive outlook for the second half of this school year.”

Importantly, adhering to the following critical practices remain essential to containing the virus for the rest of the school year.

- If your child is sick, please keep them home.
- If they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, please seek the medical advice of your family's physician and have them tested.
- If someone in your household is being tested for COVID-19, please keep your children home until the results are known.
- If someone in your household is positive for COVID-19, the entire household must quarantine (and not leave their home) as directed by Public Health.
- If you or a student is directed to quarantine, they must remain home, stay away from others, not go to work or school, not have playdates or sleepovers, not engage in extracurricular activities