

MMS COVID-19 Testing in October FAQ

What is this test?

It is a PCR test (polymerise chain reaction, which directly detects the presence of an antigen) utilizing a nasal (anterior nasal) swab. Samples are being pooled by Poplar Healthcare allowing for lower cost and a faster turnaround of results. Any pool testing positive is individually retested at no additional cost.

Why should I have my child tested?

The mass testing program allows the school to capture a snapshot of infection at a particular date. High participation gives us a stronger chance of remaining open for in-person instruction. With surveillance testing, our children are more likely to stay safe and healthy. While it is not mandatory to test at every offering, we hope you will participate to have your child tested at intervals that work for your family. If you do NOT wish to participate in school-site testing at any of the dates, please discuss with Ms. Maria.

Will the test hurt? Is it traumatic for children?

Individuals should expect a little discomfort. Nasal sampling is the *least invasive* of the effective sampling methods. The swab is inserted a half-inch into each nostril. This is NOT the “up in your brain” (nasopharyngeal) testing you have heard about or experienced elsewhere. *Test to Protect* has been working with other schools in the area and testing children as young as two without problem.

When will I receive test results?

You can expect to view your results within 48 hours. Any positive results are reported to you by phone and negative results are reported by email.

Are my results and information confidential?

Yes. All patient information received to perform testing, which identifies a patient, shall be kept confidential. However, it's mandatory to report positive test results to the Shelby County Health Department and Tennessee Department of Health. Any positive results will also be reported to the school and kept confidential so that they may help determine anyone who should stay home for a period.

How will students be tested at MMS?

Each environment will take turns going to the test area (in the library) with their guides and assistants. Cohorts (classes) will remain separate to comply with COVID-19 safety protocols. Test procedures will allow for continued social distancing.

How much does it cost? Why isn't it free?

The cost for the test is \$30.00 per person. The *Test to Protect* program is a municipally-funded program that covers tests costs for public schools. They are able to provide private schools with the staff to collect samples free of charge and access to the pool testing lab. Any families who will experience a hardship with this fee for in-person students may contact Maria directly for assistance.

Can parents and virtual class students participate?

Virtual class students and any parents/family can only be tested from 3:30-4:00 (after carpool) in order to comply with campus Covid-19 safety protocols. The program allows parents and families to participate, but anyone other than the school's students and staff will be required to self-swab. The staff will talk you through it and collect your sample for pool testing.

What safety procedure will be followed during the 3:30-4:00 time slot for parents & virtual students?

Test administrators will be screening individuals and taking temperature checks. Only those who pass screening will be allowed to participate. All individuals will need to wear masks that cover the face and nose. Family members may be asked to wait in their vehicles until their turn to test. More details regarding physical distancing logistics will be available soon.

What should I bring if I come for parents & virtual student tests at 3:30-4:00?

You will need masks for each family member, a smart phone to complete the online registration (links will be made available soon), and cash or check payment if you have not done so beforehand. You will need to arrive in a vehicle. We cannot accommodate walkers or bikers.