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December 8, 2021

**RE: VOLUNTARY WINTER BREAK RAPID ANTIGEN TESTING FOR COVID-19**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Ministry of Education is providing rapid antigen screening kits to all students in Ontario to use during the winter break. The goal is to detect any potential cases of COVID-19 in asymptomatic students, regardless of vaccination status, before they return to in-person learning when classes resume on January 3, 2021. The testing is another measure to keep everyone safe.

The rapid antigen test kits will be distributed to students in Rainbow Schools on **Friday, December 10, 2021**. Your child's participation in rapid antigen screening is **voluntary**. Students are not required to complete the testing in order to return to the classroom after the winter break. They are also not required to submit results.

If your child is absent on Friday, please call the school if you would like to arrange to pick up a testing kit.

Prior to using the rapid antigen screening kit, please read the information below.

**When to Use the Rapid Antigen Screening Kit:**

For students who choose to use the rapid antigen screening kit, **it is recommended students conduct the rapid antigen tests every 3 to 4 days over the holiday break, on every Monday and Thursday beginning December 23, until all five tests have been used.**

Rapid antigen screening kits are only to be used when a child is **asymptomatic** (i.e. does not have any symptoms of COVID-19 and has not had any exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19).

Anyone with symptoms or who is identified as a close contact of a case should still get PCR testing. Rapid antigen screening tests should not be used as a substitute for PCR tests for people with symptoms or for people who are close contacts of cases.

### **Using the Take-Home Rapid Antigen Screening Kit:**

The BTNX Rapid Response™ can be performed using anterior nasal swabbing (per the package insert, as approved by Health Canada) or using deep nasal swabbing (as recommended by Public Health Ontario in this document, given higher sensitivity compared to anterior nasal swabbing). Both types of specimen collection can be performed using the NP swab provided with the kit.

**Please follow the instructions provided with this letter.**

#### **Important note:**

Parents/guardians may choose to administer the test on children who need help.

#### **What to do after your test:**

You will know the outcome of the test within 15 minutes. If test results conducted so far are negative, your child may attend school as usual. Even if your child tests negative, they should continue to follow all relevant public health guidance, such as guidance on gathering, distancing, and masking.

A positive result on a rapid antigen screening test is considered a preliminary positive. A child that receives a positive result on a rapid antigen screening test should seek a confirmatory PCR test as soon as possible (ideally within 48 hours) at a [local testing site](#) or pharmacy that offers testing and isolate themselves until the result of that confirmatory PCR test are known.

On behalf of Rainbow Schools, I would like to thank you for your ongoing patience as we continue to work together to keep everyone safe.

Please accept our best wishes for a safe and happy holiday.

Sincerely,



Bruce Bourget  
Director of Education