



Reopening Plan 2021-2022

New York State Education Department (NYSED) position on student attendance for the 2021-2022 school year in that schools should open for in-person instruction.

The extent to which remote instruction may be used depends upon Department of Health (DOHO health and safety measures such as physical distancing requirements). The Department's position on remote instruction is as follows:

- So long as allowed by public health officials, schools should be open for in-person teaching and learning, and students should be in school.
- In case of school closures due to a declared public health emergency, schools must be prepared to provide remote instruction.
- While the Department will not require schools that are open for full-time, in-person instruction to provide on-line or remote instruction, districts may work with students and families to offer remote options if it is deemed to be in the best educational interest of the student.
- Districts should consider the value of on-line capacity developed in response to the pandemic to expand programmatic offerings and to offer remote learning opportunities that are responsive to student needs. This can be done directly, through cooperative agreements with other school districts, or through Boards of Cooperative Educational Services. This can help where documented medical conditions prohibit the safe return for students to in-person instruction and where students who have otherwise struggled have excelled with remote learning.

These issues include masking requirements, physical distancing, transportation, COVID19 testing requirements, COVID-19 screenings, community transmission rates, and local health department responsibilities. The Department has suggested that Statewide guidance consider the complexity of operating school environments and be as simple as possible while consistent with best practices and, where appropriate, local discretion. For example:

- masking for all individuals, and for all indoor events in all schools, in lieu of screening and testing;
- use of mass transit masking rules for school-supplied transportation, with no physical distancing;
- physical distancing of 3 feet indoors, where possible with local discretion; and

- better coordination by local health departments when school districts have facilities in more than one county.

The Department's Office of Student Support Services recommends the use the CDC's [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics' COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools](#) as resources. Moreover, the New York State Education Department published the [Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year](#)

Covid Operating Plan

The Academy will organize students by grade level, and instruction will be provided in-person. Students will be distanced within classrooms (minimum 2-3 feet) and in common areas throughout the building. Students in all grades will receive instruction from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. In addition, students may arrive as early as 7:15 a.m. to wait in a secure space with access to PPE prior to the start of the daily school breakfast program at 7:30 a.m.

Our school nurse will take on additional responsibilities under this plan. Nurses and staff are being trained to read temperature readings and facilitate student movement through daily walk-ins. The Academy will provide nurses with an isolation room at each facility for persons with temperature readings above 100°F or who are known to be infected on school grounds. For students with high temperatures, the nurse will wait with them and provide guidance and support (aligned to our expanded Socio-Emotional Learning curriculum focusing on resilience) until a parent or guardian is able to pick up the child. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. The nurse and school administration will notify the NYS Department of Health and the Authorizer in the event of confirmed cases. Academy administrators will also notify CSI of the specific intervention and body of actions to be taken in response to the case with the intent of containment.

Staffing levels for building security and food services will remain at previous levels. Building security will support administrators, teachers, and students in providing a safe environment by modeling and ensuring compliance with Academy PPE and face shield policies.

The Academy model comprises one lead teacher and one teaching assistant in each classroom for grade K-5. We will retain this model and ask that our teaching assistants work closely with our food services team to distribute and gather meals distributed to students who will be seated at their desks. Students will practice social distancing during meals and post-meal clean-up.

The Academy has made an extensive commitment to equitable access to online instruction by providing tablets, laptops, and broadband access to hundreds of students. Our creative capacity will allow students of varying academic needs to benefit from synchronous, and blended learning opportunities.

The Academy will develop and post extensive signage in hallways, offices, common areas, classrooms, and bathrooms as reminders on spacing, mask wearing, use of face shields, use

of hand sanitizers, hand washing, public water access, use of restrooms and, related priorities.

Contingency considerations: We operate with the conservative assumption that some community members are likely to contract the virus at some time during the school year. Our initial and contingency plans reflect customization based on the age and role of the infected party. In our messaging, we caution parents to expect that we may need to close a pod for up to 14 days. We may need to bring on substitute teachers in multiple classes, in multiple grades and for extended periods of time.

1. Facility Design – The Academy has established two entrance/exits at each facility where students will be enrolled. Entrances will accommodate persons with disabilities. At each entrance/exit, we will install a Scanner with Temperature Check and Sanitizing Station to expedite the flow of traffic in and out of the building. The scanner is produced by the National Safety Health and Compliance Commission.
2. Pod (or Enclaves)¹ Size and Structure - Our intention is to keep small pods together to optimize synchronous learning.
3. Instructional Day – The current instructional day is from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. We will be closely monitoring program design around recess and physical education (P/E).
4. Technology – The Academy has purchased screening equipment (noted above) and will maintain electronic records of body temperatures and records of close contacts. In the event of a high-temperature or infection, close contacts will be informed of the event by phone and electronically. Parents and impacted staff will receive immediate notifications of confirmed cases by phone and by e-mail.
5. Signage – The Academy has always displayed clear, large-lettered signage throughout all facilities. For the re-opening, our leadership and operations teams met and will walk each facility together to identify optimal content, wording, design, and placement of materials. Focal points for signage will include reminders to our school community to focus on mask wearing, social distancing, face shields, cleanliness, screening, classroom rules (including entering and exiting).

To that end, we will ensure school safety with respect to pod size and structure in the following ways: Our teams will monitor community wellness through screening (testing for body temperatures below 100.0°F) and provide support for persons who may become infected throughout the year. The Academy prefers that screening be done each day by parents or guardians directly.

Social Distancing: We recognize that there are instances where this will not be possible or ideal. As staff and students will be provided with masks and facial guards, we believe the hazard of spreading or contracting SARS-COVID-2 will be reduced by these other factors. Signage at each location will include distance models, tape placements on the ground to inform youngsters of appropriate distances while online or in extracurricular spaces.

Pods or enclaves of students will spend time together in their classrooms and travel together throughout the building as indicated by their schedules. Students will remain in the same groups to minimize the risk to themselves and staff. Teachers will move to deliver instruction

¹ <https://www.vox.com/2020/7/15/21324082/coronavirus-school-reopening-trump-children-safety>

to pods as needed. Large student events such as assemblies will be scheduled based on CDC guidelines.

PPE and Face Covering: The Academy will provide all elementary school students with masks. Students are expected to wear masks each day, and throughout the day. Staff and students will be required to wear facemasks or face shields while in class. We recognize that certain members of the community may face several issues while wearing masks such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, skin irritation from the mask, scratchiness due to heat on warmer days, and a host of other considerations. These frustrations coupled with new and isolating routines may pose challenges for staff and students. Existing supports include large, spacious, and air-conditioned classrooms. We will also establish contact-less water dispensers throughout the building. Working in smaller classrooms will afford students the opportunity to move around in a manner that does not jeopardize our new set of protections. For extreme cases where an individual child cannot wear a mask under any circumstance, we will consider face screens as a substitute and conduct daily screenings. Students operating under these conditions may be restricted from certain non-instructional activities that are optional and may pose a threat to staff and students within the pod. Students who arrive at school without a mask will be provided with a mask immediately upon arrival and allowed to use the scanner for temperature screen and prior to entering the building.

Operational Activity:

All community members are directed to use hand sanitizer upon being approved for entry to the facility. All facilities have been equipped with new air filtration systems which purify air and increase circulation. These filtration systems will be used during the 2021-2022 school year and are sufficient to meet our projected needs over the next several years. Our general water systems operate as they have in previous years, with the exception of public water fountains. We will establish contact-less water fountains to provide all students with the opportunity to meet hydration needs in an optimal fashion.

In addition, restrooms will be cleaned hourly on a standing rotation to reduce the probability of infection, and to ensure that frequently used surfaces are cleaned and disinfected by professional staff with high-quality cleaning agents.

Hygiene, Cleaning & Disinfection: The Academy custodial team will be on an expanded cleaning and disinfecting cycle each day. The cleaning and disinfection practices will be as follows:

1. Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure.
2. Disinfection using EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID-19 can also help reduce the risk. Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important.
3. When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants can be used (for example, 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions). Do not

mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together. This can cause fumes that may be very dangerous to breathe in. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours. Keep all disinfectants out of the reach of children.

Items will be moved or removed completely to reduce frequent handling or contact from multiple people. Soft and porous materials, such as area rugs and seating, will be removed or stored to reduce the challenges with cleaning and disinfecting them.

Frequently touched surfaces and objects that will need routine disinfection following reopening are:

Countertops	Handles	Tables
Desks	Keyboards	Toilets
Doorknobs	Light Switches	Touch Screens
Faucets and Sinks	Phones	Desk Partitions

The appropriate PPE will be worn for the chemicals being used for routine cleaning and disinfecting. Following the directions on the disinfectant label for additional PPE needs. In specific instances, personnel with specialized training and equipment will be brought in as required to apply certain disinfectants such as fumigants or fogs.

Surfaces frequently touched by multiple people, such as door handles, desks, phones, light switches, and faucets, will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily. More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use. See examples below:

Desks, Worktables, and Computer Keyboards – Shared

Products: An all-purpose cleaning product and a high-quality microfiber cloth. Keyboard covers

are more easily cleaned than the keys.

Recommended cleaning schedule: Clean daily after each Cohort.

During outbreak of gastrointestinal illnesses or flu: Clean in between uses or after each group session.

Desks, Worktables, and Computer Keyboards – Not Shared

Products: An all-purpose cleaning product and a microfiber cloth.

Recommended cleaning schedule: Clean daily or as needed.

Cafeteria Tables and Floors

Products: A cleaning detergent that removes dirt and allergenic protein matter, and high-quality microfiber cloths/mops. Sponges are not recommended due to their potential to spread contamination).

Recommended cleaning schedule: Clean after each use, before the next group arrives.

Other Surfaces Touched by a Variety of Hands (phones, light fixtures, stair railings, doorknobs and push bars, elevator buttons, water fountains, etc.)

Products: An all-purpose cleaning product and a high-quality microfiber cloth.

Recommended cleaning schedule: clean hourly/daily.

During outbreak of gastrointestinal illnesses or flu: clean touch points in between classes or periodic events.

Floors in Classrooms and Hallways

Products: A neutral floor-cleaning product specific to flooring material that removes dirt year-round (and salt in the wintertime), and a microfiber mop.

Recommended cleaning schedule: Clean daily.

Elementary School cleaning and sanitization

Based on the Cohorts developed for alternate days classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized after each group leaves. All furniture, computers, and any surface will be sanitized cleaning with a cloth and then the use of a sprayer/fogger machine to ensure surface is reached. Bathrooms will be on an hourly cleaning schedule, and all regularly touched surfaces.

On Wednesdays when classes are out a complete cleaning and sanitization will be done in the entire building.

High School and Middle School cleaning and sanitization

At the end of the school day complete cleaning and sanitization will be done in the building. All furniture, computers, and any surface will be sanitized cleaning with a cloth and then the use of a sprayer/fogger machine to ensure surface is reached. Bathrooms will be on an hourly cleaning schedule, and all regularly touched surfaces.

Extracurriculars: Physical education classes will be conducted each day following the CDC guidelines. As noted previously, we will consider mechanisms to support elementary grade students having access to playgrounds and outdoor activity using best practices. We will maintain social distancing and mask and/or face shield wearing. STEM and Music and lab classes will be conducted in-person. The Academy contemplated an on-site music program or a fully virtual music program where students took instruments home, however the potential losses would be cost prohibitive. Therefore, the program for this Fall of 2020 calls for students to receive more intensive instruction in music theory. We will adopt a similar approach in STEM to build the conceptual understanding of students during a time when the applied field may be obstructed.

Before and After Care: As noted in previous sections of the document, the Academy plans to support the school community in a number of ways throughout the process. We begin with grounding expectations in our communications with the school community. We want to maintain community for all members, especially for those who may become infected and those who may have to transition the nature of their relationship based on potential or actual exposure to the virus. We want our community decisions to be scientifically based and thoughtful in our conversations about the virus and about the risks and realities of infection. Therefore, we are messaging and prioritizing our core principles of social distancing, mask wearing, face shield covering, routine hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting and immunological care. We are strongly recommending that our community build an early-warning system through daily screening and through mechanisms that build containment.

In the event of a confirmed case involving staff or a student, we will notify impacted community members immediately, and proceed to quarantine impacted individuals. Infected people will be quarantined based on the CDC guidelines.

In the event of a more widespread even, multiple pods, classes or grades may be required to shut down for an indeterminate amount of time. We will inform parents that circumstances may arise on occasions throughout the year, and that while these safeguards may be extensive. We will still be operating in the world – in Hempstead, in Uniondale, in Nassau County, on Long Island, in New York State, and many of us will be coming into contact with individuals making different choices about hygiene, disinfecting, mask-wearing, social distancing and immune system health. All these variables will define our shared reality over the 2021-2022 school year.

A cornerstone of our before and after care program will be our Socio-Emotional Learning curriculum on resilience. Parents, families, students, and staff will all require a measure of resilience to consistently practice good habits and commit to getting results that matter even when our relationships and feedback looks and feels so different. During our pre-service program, third party vendors will conduct training for teachers and staff to geared toward better serving the students when they return in September for the 2021-2022 school year.

Transportation: This area remains a responsibility of sending districts. The overwhelming majority of Academy families do not receive transportation services from the district. The sending districts have all established guidelines for riding on school buses which require mask wearing, and social distancing. We have expanded our hours for receiving students as we recognize the programmatic strain for the district in transporting children given these new constraints. Students may arrive at 7:15 a.m. Upon arriving, our nurse or nurse's aide will screen temperature elevation and evidence of symptoms. Students will be able to sit in a dedicated space (wearing masks and social distancing) prior to the start of the breakfast program at 7:30 a.m.

Food Services: The Academy will continue our tradition of serving meals to all students in grades K-12. Pods will be established for students and staff in the cafeteria. Moreover, circumstances may arise when students may be served meals in their classrooms under the supervision of select staff. Meals will be stored in cleaned and disinfected carts for transport to classrooms. Meals will be prepared in individualized and sealed packages to be opened by students. In most instances, no assistance from teaching assistants will be required. Meals will be unloaded at the beginning of the lunch period and reloaded at the close. Meals will then be transported from classrooms to the kitchen, whereupon the meals will be discarded, and the delivery carts will be cleaned as part of the overall daily kitchen cleaning up. At the conclusion of meals, students will be granted time to wash hands, use sanitizer and return to instruction.

Mental Health, Behavioral, and Emotional Support Services & Programs: Select vendors including *Corwin Press* provide SEL trainings and materials for training teachers to train students. This year, our teachers will receive pre-service and in-service training throughout the year. Teachers and guidance counselors will turnkey this curriculum to students. Sessions delivered during our character education, homeroom, and house block. In addition, our social workers will work closely with families and students.

Response and Communication: The Academy is committed to extensive and ongoing communication with the school community. We will continue to communicate with families

via Dojo, School Messenger, Remind, and other platforms including the website and social media. We will continue to follow the guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NYDOH), New York State Education Department (NYSED), and the Governor's Office.

In addition to these logistical considerations, we convey the real chance that infection for some members of our community is likely, and that our actions to ensure safety may include partial or whole school closures, and transition to partial or full remote instruction may be necessary on occasion throughout the school year. Thus, the school year calendar may be amended, as necessary.

Covid Response Coordinator Responsibilities

The Academy has a designated COVID Response Coordinator who communicates with the Nassau County Department of Health (DOH) and the Academy's Human Capital department to ensure compliance within the state, county, and school district COVID protocols. The coordinator, who has a background and training in public health and infectious disease surveillance, is responsible for case investigation and contact tracing for each self-reported positive case for Academy students and staff. In communication with the DOH, the Coordinator individually interviews each person to determine if he/she/they are a "close contact" and makes recommendation based on risk level. Risk of potentially contracting COVID is based on federal CDC and NYSDOH guidelines. The Nassau County DOH provides guidelines in using quarantine as a measure of enforcing safety and reducing community spread. In the event a person is advised to self-quarantine, they may further be contacted by the County DOH for daily follow-up. When an individual is placed in quarantine, he/she is deemed at a higher risk level and home self-monitoring is the safest environment. The goal overall is to reduce community spread and potential cluster cases.

On occasion, the Coordinator will advise class quarantine and changes to the curriculum for safety reasons. Dependent on age of students, class safety behaviors, and other factors, class quarantine may be enacted, and classes will change from in-person instruction to virtual instruction or remote learning. The Coordinator communicates with the DOH in advising the most appropriate measure in abundance of safety for all individuals. We ask students and staff advised to quarantine to self-monitor. In the case of a student, we ask the caregiver's assistance in monitoring the student for any symptoms and to communicate with the health office or teacher of any changes. While persons in quarantine may test negative or feel well, the DOH quarantine time frame (usually 10 days) is applied in abundance of caution. The Coordinator will notify the Chief Academic Officer, Directors of Operations, Principal, Teachers, School Counselor, Administrative Office, and the School Nurse in the event of a class quarantine.

Upon conclusion of case investigation, the Coordinator prepares community letters notifying persons of an exposure. Human Capital will release the staff notice for persons working in the building. The respective administrative office will post family notices to the ClassDOJO, Remind, and School Messenger page for students of that class. If students are individually designated as close contacts, the Coordinator will call the home and request quarantine and notify the family the County DOH will further follow-up.

The COVID Response Coordinator centralizes all COVID case information for Academy students and staff and stays in communication with school health offices, Directors of Operations, Human Capital, and Academic Leadership. All personal information is kept confidential during case investigation.

The Coordinator further uses technology, the **MyMedBot** App to view daily student and staff health screenings in real time. When an individual notes risk, the CNA, school health office, or Coordinator will follow-up with the staff member or student's caregiver.

Response

The Academy has a designated COVID Response Coordinator trained in public health prevention and response. The Coordinator is in charge of health surveillance of daily health screening Apps, performs case investigation and contact tracing, communicates with the DOH to make individual and/or class quarantine recommendations, centralizes all case information with confidentiality, and notifies Academy staff and Academy families upon an exposure. The Coordinator is the intermediary of COVID Safety Operations and local, state, and federal Compliance. The Coordinator updates Executive Leadership with the current state of Academy operations daily. The Coordinator further communicates with the LSL lab when referring at-risk persons for onsite Rapid testing, and assists coordination of onsite COVID vaccination programs.

Communication

After a student or staff member reports a positive COVID test to the health office, health screening App, or administrative office, the COVID Response Coordinator performs a case investigation and contact tracing of close contacts. Upon conclusion of case investigation, the Coordinator prepares community letters notifying community persons of an exposure. Human Capital will release staff notices to persons working in that building. The individual school administrative office will post family notices on ClassDOJO, Remind, School Messenger for students of that particular classroom. If students are individually designated as close contacts, the Coordinator will further call the homes to request quarantine and inform caregivers the county DOH will contact them shortly to continue follow-up.

We will continue to follow the guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), New York State Education Department (NYSED), and the Governor's Office. In an abundance of caution to ensure safety, we may include partial or whole school closures, and transition to partial or full remote instruction throughout the school year. Thus, the school year calendar may be amended, as necessary.

Limited-Service Laboratory (LSL).

The Academy has on-site lab facilities to perform SARS-CoV-2 rapid antigen tests for students and staff. Trained technicians perform Point of Care antigen tests for the purpose of 1) diagnostic testing (suspected exposure) or 2) screening (no exposure). Dr. Tamika Julien of the Yale School of Nursing serves as the Laboratory Director for Limited-Service Laboratories (LSL) at Hempstead and Uniondale campuses.

SARS-CoV-2 POC antigen test

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has given Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of SARS-CoV-2 antigen tests for community and congregate settings. The antigen test detects COVID virus proteins from the nasal swab. This is different from a molecular test or PCR test which detects genetic material. The sensitivity and specificity of the rapid antigen test are comparable to molecular tests, and are thus, considered valid and authorized for testing.

The LSL is staffed by nurses, medical assistants, and lab assistants, trained in performing rapid antigen testing. The LSL uses Abbot Binax NOW testing kits, approved by New York State. The authorized technician will first check for parental permission if student is under 18. Persons over 18 will give verbal consent and supply date of birth for records. Then the technician will conduct the test as follows: technician will insert the nasal swab into each nostril which will take approximately 5-15 seconds. Next, the technician will insert swab into testing kit, apply extraction agent, and seal. The technician will use a stopwatch to monitor 15 minutes to obtain test result. Technician will give verbal and written notification of result to persons testing. Academy LSL logs containing identifiers and test results will be kept confidential. All results are reported to the Commission of Health through the Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting System (ECLRS).

1) Diagnostic testing:

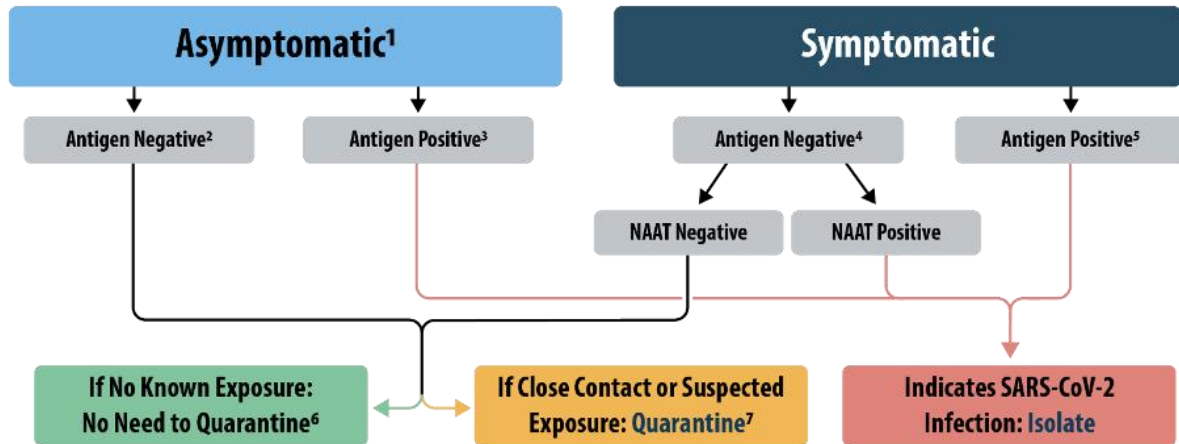
When an individual has self-reported a positive case for COVID-19, the COVID Response Coordinator may coordinate testing of close contacts already on campus. There may be times when a case investigation warrants testing of multiple students in a classroom which is currently in session. The COVID Response Coordinator will coordinate with the Director of Operations LSL testing of staff and students. All persons will remain in the area after receiving results and not return to class.

If an asymptomatic person tests positive, this person will be referred to get a PCR test at an off-site facility such as Urgent Care. Both test results will be sent to the Department of Health. This person should go directly into Isolation and will be contacted by the Department of Health.

If an asymptomatic person tests negative and is determined by the COVID Response Coordinator to be a close contact, he/she/they will be referred to quarantine for 10 days, and further contacted by the DOH. If the testing is precautionary or done for personal knowledge, the Coordinator will direct this person to return to regular duties.

If a symptomatic person tests positive, this person should go into Isolation and wait for a call from the DOH.

If a symptomatic person tests negative, this person should be treated as presumptive negative, but will be referred to get a PCR test (or NAAT) within 48-hours to confirm. This person will be further counseled by his/her medical professional. This person should go into Isolation while waiting for results and will be further followed-up by the COVID Response Coordinator.



Source: CDC Interim Guidance for Antigen Testing for SARS-CoV-2 (updated June 14, 2021)

2) Screening testing:

The Academy may have events for which multiple individuals will require testing but there is no determined exposure. The rapid antigen tests at the LSL are valid for 6 hours from testing. New York State has made this a requirement for large, indoor gatherings in the past, e.g. High School Commencement. The Directors of Operations will coordinate scheduled testing of staff and students for such events. Compliance testing will reflect the most updated guidance by the New York State Department of Health.

The LSL at Hempstead is located in Room L04 of the Middle School at 159 North Franklin Street Hempstead, NY, 11550. Hours are 7-11am for appointments, and 11am-3pm for Walk-In's. The LSL at Uniondale is located in Room 116 of the Uniondale Elementary School at 100 Charles Lindberg Blvd. Uniondale, NY, 11553. Hours are 8:30am- 4pm.

Symptomatic persons suspecting COVID should discuss setting up an appointment with the COVID Response Coordinator or directly with lab professionals using the office extension line. Symptomatic students are not encouraged to come to school to test, but rather seek a medical appointment with a healthcare provider who can address the full medical history with his/her caregiver.

The LSL is also authorized to test for Influenza.