



Supported by



The
ROCKEFELLER
FOUNDATION

Assembling a Testing Task Force

As of February 15, 2021

If you have not already assembled a Testing Task Force, you may find it helpful to complete this activity prior to engaging in any of the Tabletop Exercises or as a stand alone exercise.

Disclaimer

These materials are preliminary and non-exhaustive and are being made available on a nonexclusive basis solely for information purposes in response to the urgent need for measures to address the COVID 19 crisis. They reflect the general insight and may present potential options for consideration based on currently available information, which is inherently uncertain and subject to change but do not contain all of the information needed to determine a future course of action. The insights and concepts included in these materials have not been validated or independently verified. References to specific products or organizations are solely for illustration and do not constitute any endorsement or recommendation.

These materials do not constitute, and should not be interpreted as, policy, accounting, legal, medical, tax or other regulated advice, or a recommendation on any specific course of action. These materials are not a guarantee of results and cannot be relied upon. Future results may differ materially from any statements of expectation, forecasts or projections. Particularly in light of rapidly evolving conditions, these materials are provided “as is” without any representation or warranty, and all liability is expressly disclaimed for any loss or damage of any kind. The recipient is solely responsible for all of its decisions, use of these materials, and compliance with applicable laws, rules and regulations. Consider seeking advice of legal and other relevant certified/licensed experts prior to taking any specific steps.

The Rockefeller Foundation does not guarantee the accuracy, completeness or integrity of the information collected from the secondary data sources and interviewees. Further, the information is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended as an endorsement, guidance, recommendations, or advice for any particular product, program or policy. Any use or interpretation of or reliance on the information for any purpose, is solely and exclusively the responsibility of the recipients of the information.

THE INFORMATION IS PROVIDED “AS IS”. NO WARRANTY OF ANY KIND IS GIVEN FOR THE INFORMATION UNDER ANY NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL LAW, INCLUDING WARRANTY AGAINST INFRINGEMENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY. THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION expressly disclaims and assumes no responsibility for any losses, damages, claims, or other liabilities, including loss of goodwill, revenue, profits, or business interruption, or any consequential, special, indirect, incidental, punitive or exemplary loss, including costs of defense or attorneys’ fees, arising out of or relating to use of this information. It is expressly understood that The Rockefeller Foundation, by providing this information, has no obligation to update the information or provide additional support or information to the recipient.

Assembling a Task Force



School districts must execute a coordinated response to effectively design and implement a testing program. Superintendents or their designees must set up a task force to ensure that the right people are in leadership roles to navigate this task.

The Testing Task Force may be created by repurposing of a group that already meets regularly, or it may be an entirely new group that convenes for this purpose. These materials will help you convene your task force prior to the initial meeting. Once the task force is set up, it should meet on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to provide updates and seek feedback.

Superintendent's Task: Use this document to identify members of your task force and set up an initial meeting.

I. Proposed Task Force Roles for District Staff

Task Force Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Staff
Communications Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops all communications regarding the school/district’s COVID-19 testing strategy and reopening plans • Holds forums for parents and families to understand testing strategy and generate confidence in community • Coordinates information sharing between all stakeholders through the appropriate points of contact • Develops the reporting processes for communications to local/state government bodies, parents, staff, and local public health authority. 	Director of Communications or Chief of Staff Superintendent’s Designee: _____
Vendor Management Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies vendors and use Vendor Evaluation Tool to determine best fit vendor for school based on resources and testing approach • Coordinates vendor specific training of Test Administrators prior to implementing testing • Disseminates information on test kits, registration and reporting from vendor to school, staff, and parents • Establishes estimates for ordering cadence for test kits • Troubleshoots any issues with test kit availability or other testing issues with vendors 	Chief Operating Officer, Purchasing Director or designee Superintendent’s Designee: _____

I. Proposed Task Force Roles for District Staff

Task Force Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Staff
Facilities Management Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops Covid-19 cleaning and disinfecting plans per CDC and Department of Health guidance. • Alerts and/or directs custodial staff to any rooms or areas where positive case contact has been made • Notifies the custodial staff of the designated area and oversees cleaning and disinfection • Ensures that affected areas are not used until adequately cleaned • Oversees regular disinfection and cleaning of Covid-19 isolation areas • Regularly updates the cleaning and disinfecting protocols and procedures per new guidance. • Facilitates any necessary updates to ventilation system or room layouts to maintain optimal physical distancing 	Director of Facilities or Director of Operations Superintendent's Designee: _____
Learning and Improvement Lead*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with Testing Taskforce to determine S.M.A.R.T. objectives for testing program • Develops a monitoring and evaluation plan based upon the CDC Monitoring and Evaluation Checklist for K-12 Schools • Develops evaluation design and questions, and key performance indicators for evaluation • Determines when data and findings should be reviewed for testing program iteration • Communicates key evaluative findings to testing taskforce to drive data-driven decisions to iterate on testing strategy 	Designee from accountability or data offices Superintendent's Designee: _____

*If the district does not have the right person in-house to staff this role, it should consider whether the responsibilities could be fulfilled by way of collaboration with an evidence-based university, research group, or non-profit organization with which the district works regularly.

I. Proposed Task Force Roles for District Staff

Task Force Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Staff
School Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alerts District COVID-19 Coordinator of positive cases in school via case and close contact list Manages internal and external communications regarding outbreak status of the school Notifies staff and students of potential exposure Coordinates faculty in collecting parental consent Manages master student parental consent list Serves as primary point of contact to answer questions and provide information for staff, students and families Builds a diverse testing committee to oversee school testing strategy and set key performance indicators to measure success 	Principal or Asst. Principal* Superintendent's Designee: _____
Test Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees sample collection of student test samples Stores and seals test samples according to manufacturer guidelines Distributes collection kits and swabs to classrooms/test sites Ensure all sample collection tubes are returned at end of day Registers sample collection tubes and fill out necessary paperwork for test kits (if conducting pooled approach) Updates student roster as students are tested, and ensures correct students are tested on correct days 	School Nurse or Health Clerk*

*In districts with a significant number of schools, this role may need to be filled by a district-level supervisor to keep the task force to a manageable size

I. Proposed Task Force Roles for District Staff

Task Force Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Staff
COVID-19 Ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares information with students and staff about the school’s COVID-19 testing program, including importance, impact, and any changes to the program • Collects feedback from students and staff on ways to improve the testing program • Answers ad-hoc student questions about the school’s COVID-19 testing program 	<p>Communications team member and school-based designees (both staff and students) who get trained</p> <p>Superintendent’s Designee:</p> <p>_____</p>
Data and/or Information Technology coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds, procures, and/or maintains systems used to collect data on testing inventory, procedures, and results • Integrates new data systems with the school’s existing technical infrastructure • Ensures security of data infrastructure and compliance with applicable law • Develops and maintains reporting and dashboarding functions 	<p>Director of IT, Director of Analytics, or equivalent</p> <p>Superintendent’s Designee:</p> <p>_____</p>

II. Proposed Task Force Roles for External Stakeholders

Task Force Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Staff
Local Health Department Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that the testing strategies align with local, state and federal, health and safety guidelines • Assists in navigating if tests need to be ordered by an ordering physician • Advises on PPE needs and state reporting requirements • Advises on core indicators that inform school operations (e.g., percent change in new cases, hospital bed capacity, community spread rate, etc.) and what conditions in the school and broader community might lead to a potential school closure • Coordinates with school to monitor positive cases in the school, and if/when to close areas or schools in the event of an outbreak 	<p>Representative(s) from city health department, county health department, and / or local health systems</p> <p>Superintendent’s Designee: _____</p>
Local / State Government Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that school policies follow recommendations of local/state directives and are consistent with Federal, state and local laws, including FERPA • Coordinates with school to monitor school positive cases, and if/when to close areas or schools in the event of an outbreak • Assists in school application for CARES Act funding to support Covid-19 mitigation strategies in K-12 schools 	<p>Local elected officials, state department of health personnel</p> <p>Superintendent’s Designee: _____</p>

II. Proposed Task Force Roles for External Stakeholders

Task Force Role	Responsibilities	Suggested Staff
Community Mental Health Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consults on childhood and adolescent impacts of school closure and reopening• Ensures that reopening strategies, including testing, are trauma-informed and promote the physical, social and emotional well-being of students• Ensures that the school community has access to resources that can support social and emotional wellness	Representatives from local mental health providers, qualified university personnel, etc Superintendent's Designee: _____

III. Establishing Governance Strategy for the Task Force

After the Superintendent or designee have identified the members of the task force, s/he should decide or designate someone to decide the following questions:

- Q** How often will the Task Force meet? Weekly is most common

A
- Q** How will members receive information, who will share that information, and how frequently?

A
- Q** Who are the “final decision-makers” for each section of the Tabletop Exercise?

A
- Q** Where will all data, documents, and resources be stored, and who will have access to it? How will you ensure your district complies with privacy provisions?

A
- Q** Who will retain the master copies or important documents?

A

Resources for the Initial Meeting

Steps Prior to the Initial Meeting

- Connect with school board members or similar governing body to let them know about your intent to test staff and students prior to engaging in extensive planning.
- Create the testing task force and send a calendar invite for the initial meeting. Invite school staff, public health and government officials, parents and external stakeholders as necessary.
- On the initial meeting invite, include a copy of the Tabletop Exercises and ask participants to familiarize themselves with the task force structure.
- Review all Tabletop Exercise materials and share them with members of the task force for review prior to the meeting. Members should come to the meeting with an understanding of the role they will play and should review job responsibilities prior to attending.

Items to Review During the Meeting

- Task Force role descriptions
- *Project Planning Workbook for K-12 COVID-19 Testing*
- The Rockefeller Foundation's *Covid-19 Testing in K-12 Settings: A Playbook for Educators and Leaders*

Resources for the Initial Meeting

Objectives for the Initial Meeting

- Identify the team members and external stakeholders who will lead the initiative to establish comprehensive district-wide testing
- Review resources available to each task force member
- Establish when subgroups from the task force will complete discrete projects of the Tabletop Exercise and report back to the whole group
- Establish an ongoing meeting cadence for task force members and other stakeholders who will be relevant to the project

Sample Agenda for the Initial Meeting

- I. Explain the purpose of the task force and review the timeline for creating a district-wide testing program
- II. Review roles in the task force and identify who will be playing which role. If necessary, identify other team members who will support task force leads for attendance at some or all task force meetings
- III. Ask each task force member to briefly describe the work they will manage and how this work aligns with the creation of the testing objectives
- IV. Review resources provided to the task force, including those outlined in the Tabletop Exercises and the Project Planning Workbook
- V. Establish a governance structure in which task force members understand how they will work together
- VI. Establish a communication cadence that includes the school community at large and external partners
- VII. Determine when and how often subgroups will meet to complete projects outlined in the Tabletop Exercises, as well as when and how often the entire task force will meet

Resources for the Initial Meeting

Next Steps After the Initial Meeting

- District Coordinator establishes regular check-ins with task force subgroups to complete the Tabletop Exercises, solve problems, and meet objectives
- Staff member sends out calendar invites for future task force and sub-group meetings based on the schedule decided at the initial meeting
- Roll out communication to the school community at large and external partners as needed