**Template Letter about Employee Testing

Purpose:** The following letter can be customized to introduce BinaxNOW COVID-19 testing for district employees. It assumes the program will be voluntary in the district; however, it encourages participation to protect the safety of students and staff. It also assumes all OSDH requirements have been or will be met prior to program implementation.

The accompanying survey can be used to measure interest in the program.
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Dear [District] family:

This school year has been full of challenges, obstacles, opportunities and achievements. From embracing safety procedures to [preparing for or implementing] distance learning, you have done everything possible to ensure students are continuing to learn in a safe environment with as little disruption as possible. I am grateful for your commitment, hard work and innovation. The district’s success this school year would not have been possible without the people who make it a special place to work and to learn, especially members of our certified and support team.

As you know, we’ve taken unprecedented steps this year to protect the safety of students and staff. I am excited to share that we will soon have another tool to help slow the spread of COVID-19. **Thanks to a partnership with the Oklahoma State Department of Health, we will begin offering on-site COVID-19 testing for employees beginning [date].**

Testing will be voluntary, but I hope you will consider participating so you can better protect yourself and others from the virus. The school board and administrative team are happy to offer this as a benefit and service – at no cost to you or to the district. It will be especially valuable if private providers must begin charging for testing in the future.

The BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card is a rapid antigen test designed to detect active infections of the virus. The sample is collected with a nasal swab, which does not have to be inserted as high as other tests require. Results, which are 97% accurate, are available within 15 minutes and can be received through an app on your phone if you choose. When individuals test positive, they will also be given the opportunity to receive a PCR test, the gold standard of COVID-19 testing, to confirm the results.

A member of the staff will be properly trained to administer the tests, and we are firmly committed to ensuring the results will remain confidential. The tests will be offered at [location] to protect the safety and privacy of all employees. It is important for me to share, however, that the results of the tests must be provided to the state Department of Education and the state Department of Health. The district must comply to participate in the federally funded program.

We expect to receive enough rapid tests to screen at least 50% of all employees each month. [**Samples:** (1) We will administer tests to team members at their request, including, but not limited to, when they experience an exposure or the onset of symptoms. (2) In addition to as-needed testing, we will administer testing on a rotating basis to employees, with their permission, of course. We believe this will best help us slow the spread of the virus. *(3) Do not specify a testing strategy and continue to the next paragraph, allowing employee feedback to guide your decision-making.*] **[Consider adding a sentence or two here about your district’s leave policy to alleviate employee concerns about missing work due to a positive test, particularly if they are asymptomatic.]**

At this time, we would like to know who is interested in participating in the testing program so we can properly prepare. Please share your thoughts with us by completing this short online survey: [insert link]. Again, participation is voluntary. I care about you and your health so I hope it is something you will strongly consider.

Thank you again for being the heart and soul of this school district. You are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Superintendent]
[District]