**Template Press Release about Employee Testing

Purpose:** The following press release can be customized and shared with local media to promote the district’s employee testing program, as well as its commitment to student and staff safety.
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[Date]

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**FOR MORE INFORMATION: [Contact]
 [Phone Number] I [Email]
 **Committed to Safety:***[District] offering free COVID testing for staff*

[District] Public Schools has added another level of mitigation to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Thanks to a federally funded program, all district employees can test onsite for the virus at no charge to them or to the district.

The program, facilitated by the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the Oklahoma State Department of Health, is voluntary, district officials said.

“From embracing safety procedures to [preparing for or implementing] distance learning, our certified and support professionals have done everything possible to ensure students are continuing to learn in a safe environment with as little disruption as possible,” Superintendent [Name] said. “We are happy to offer this as a benefit and service to them. We must do everything we can to keep our students and staff members safe and healthy. Their work this year – and every year – is greatly appreciated.”

The district is using BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Cards, a rapid antigen test designed to detect active infections of the virus. The sample is collected by nasal swab. Results, which are 97% accurate, are available within 15 minutes. When individuals test positive, they are also given the opportunity to receive a PCR test – the gold standard of COVID-19 testing – to confirm the results.

State officials have notified participating districts they will receive enough tests each month to test approximately half of their staff members. [District] employees will be tested [insert language about how testing will be conducted in the district – as needed, by strategic rotation or both.]

A member of the district’s staff has been trained to administer the tests, and the employees’ results remain confidential. As a requirement of the program, however, the district is mandated to share testing results with OSDE and OSDH representatives.

On-site staff testing joins a long list of safety protocols adopted this year by [District], including [insert list of precautions already in place.]