

Good day parents and guardians,

We are reaching out to inform you that Virgin Islands Montessori School and Peter Gruber International Academy (VIMSIA) and the Virgin Islands Department of Health are working together to improve the tracking of respiratory, gastrointestinal, and other illnesses among school-aged children in the USVI. The primary goal of this program is to control further spread of disease.

There are two components to this program:

1. VIMSIA will share daily counts of the number of students absent with symptoms of respiratory, gastrointestinal, and other illness anonymously.

We are asking that the caregiver reporting absences related to illness share the illness symptoms with school staff. Symptoms may include:

<i>Respiratory</i>	<i>Gastrointestinal</i>	<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cough• Fever• Runny nose• Sore throat• Nasal congestion• Body aches• Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diarrhea• Vomiting• Stomach cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Malaise (general feeling of illness or discomfort)• Lethargy (lack of energy)• Headache• Body aches• Fatigue• Any other symptoms

2. Students who are sick with respiratory symptoms are eligible for laboratory testing, with parent/guardian approval.

- a. If the student is presenting with respiratory symptoms *at home*, a respiratory viruses test may be acquired at your provider's office or at the following VIDOH test sites:
 - St. Thomas: Schneider Regional Medical Center Loading Dock, Monday through Friday 9:30am-10:30am (no appointment needed)
 - St. John: VIPA gravel lot, Wednesday 12:00pm noon – 3:00pm (no appointment needed)
- b. If the student is presenting with respiratory symptoms *while at school*, the nurse can collect and submit the sample for respiratory viruses testing (COVID-19, Flu-A, Flu-B, and RSV) at the VIDOH public health laboratory.

We ask that you please do not send your student to school to receive testing. If you need support in accessing testing, please contact VIDOH-EPI staff below.

Laboratory test results for samples collected at school will be provided directly to the parent/guardian, student, and school (ordering provider). No identifiable information will be shared beyond these three contacts.

VIMSIA and VIDOH-EPI staff are committed to ensuring that your student's information will be securely stored, and that no identifiable information will be shared publicly.

As a reminder, COVID-19 and Influenza A/B vaccines are FREE and the best way to protect you and your student from severe illness and hospitalization. Vaccines for children are available at

any Maternal Child Health Clinic by calling to make an appointment at 340-777-8804 ext. 2600 on St. Thomas and 340-776-6400 on St. John.

Thank you for your support in preventing the spread of diseases at VIMSIA and across the territory!

Kind regards,

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