

THE DAILY GAZETTE | Wednesday, May 20, 2020

# NEWS



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## COVID-19 testing ramps up at Schenectady County-owned Glendale Home

Processing at state lab limited

[Pete DeMola](#) | [May 19, 2020](#)



Glendale Home

PHOTOGRAPHER: MARC SCHULTZ/GAZETTE PHOTOGRAPHER

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SCHENECTADY — State-mandated testing is now underway at the county-run Glendale Home.

Testing began on Monday in accordance with the new directive requiring long-term care facilities to test their employees twice per week.

“As test kits become more available from the Governor’s Office, it makes following through on these mandates easier,” Schenectady County Manager Rory Fluman said on Tuesday.

The county, which is also testing Glendale residents, is sending kits to the state-run Wadsworth Center in Albany for processing, which will immediately notify county officials of the results.

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"At that point, it will be the responsibility for our [county Public Health Department] to not only let our Glendale employees know if they're positive or negative, but also to all let all other nursing homes know who are in a similar exercise this week," said Fluman, who delivered comments at the county's first formal press conference since the onset of the crisis (The county has been holding weekly Facebook Live events since mid-April).

At present, 203 full-time staffers and 41 part-time employees care for the 194 residents at the Hetcheltown Road location.

That amounts to 438 weekly tests if everyone were tested twice weekly.

The county is exploring additional back-up lab options because Wadsworth can only accept 150 tests from Glendale each day.

"We are limited as far how many we're able to send to Wadsworth, so we have secondary and tertiary labs that we're beginning relationships with," Fluman said.

Those include BioReference in New Jersey, and another in Tennessee.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo has asked labs to reserve the capacity to process at least 35,000 tests per day.

The state Department of Health didn't directly answer when asked if Wadsworth had the capacity to handle the influx of tests from adult-care facilities across the state.

But officials said the research lab has been "operating 24/7" and is testing thousands of New Yorkers each week.

Facilities are responsible for providing testing for their employees, including "assuming responsibility for the costs of testing," said Jill Montag, a state spokesperson.

"However, the department removed potential barriers to this testing initiative by sending 320,000 testing kits directly to facilities this week and connecting all facilities with commercial labs that have capacity to manage tens of thousands of tests daily," Montag said.

Fifteen of Schenectady County's deaths have been at adult-care facilities, including a death of a man in his 70s announced on Tuesday, the first since May 2.

Testing is also scheduled to begin this week at Ingersoll Place Assisted Living in Niskayuna, where seven residents have died.



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"There are no residents or staff known to be positive at Ingersoll at the present time," said spokesperson Ceil Mack on Tuesday.

Ingersoll received a one-week supply of test kits from the county.

County officials said they have received kits for one round of testing at nursing homes and are working with state Department of Health to procure more.

"We have not received any kits for adult-care facilities from the state, but we are working with the [state Department of Health] to get test kits for these facilities as well," said Erin Roberts, a Schenectady County spokesperson.

Glendale has escaped the fate of other local adult-care facilities that have combated outbreaks, including the Albany County-run Shaker Place Rehabilitation & Nursing Center in Colonie, where 14 residents have died; Teresian House in Albany, where 17 have succumbed to the virus; and Diamond Hill Nursing and Rehabilitation in Troy, where 16 residents have died.

"As of today, zero Glendale patients have tested positive," Fluman said.

To date just one part-time staffer had returned a positive diagnosis.

The county attributes a series of quick measures implemented in mid-March.

In addition to banning visitors and requiring temperature screenings, the county Legislature enacted an emergency sick bank for its employees to ensure that potentially ill staffers did not report to work.

County lawmakers also authorized the hiring of an additional 10 public health nurses. Fifteen were ultimately added along with five new cleaners.

Roughly 25 percent of the state's fatalities have occurred in nursing homes, and the state has come under heavy criticism for its directive ordering facilities to accept positive patients discharged from other facilities.

The state walked back the directive last week when it said hospitals can no longer discharge patients to nursing homes unless they test negative.

But positive patients can still be accepted from elsewhere.

Fluman said he expects the first round of testing at Glendale will be completed by the end of the week.

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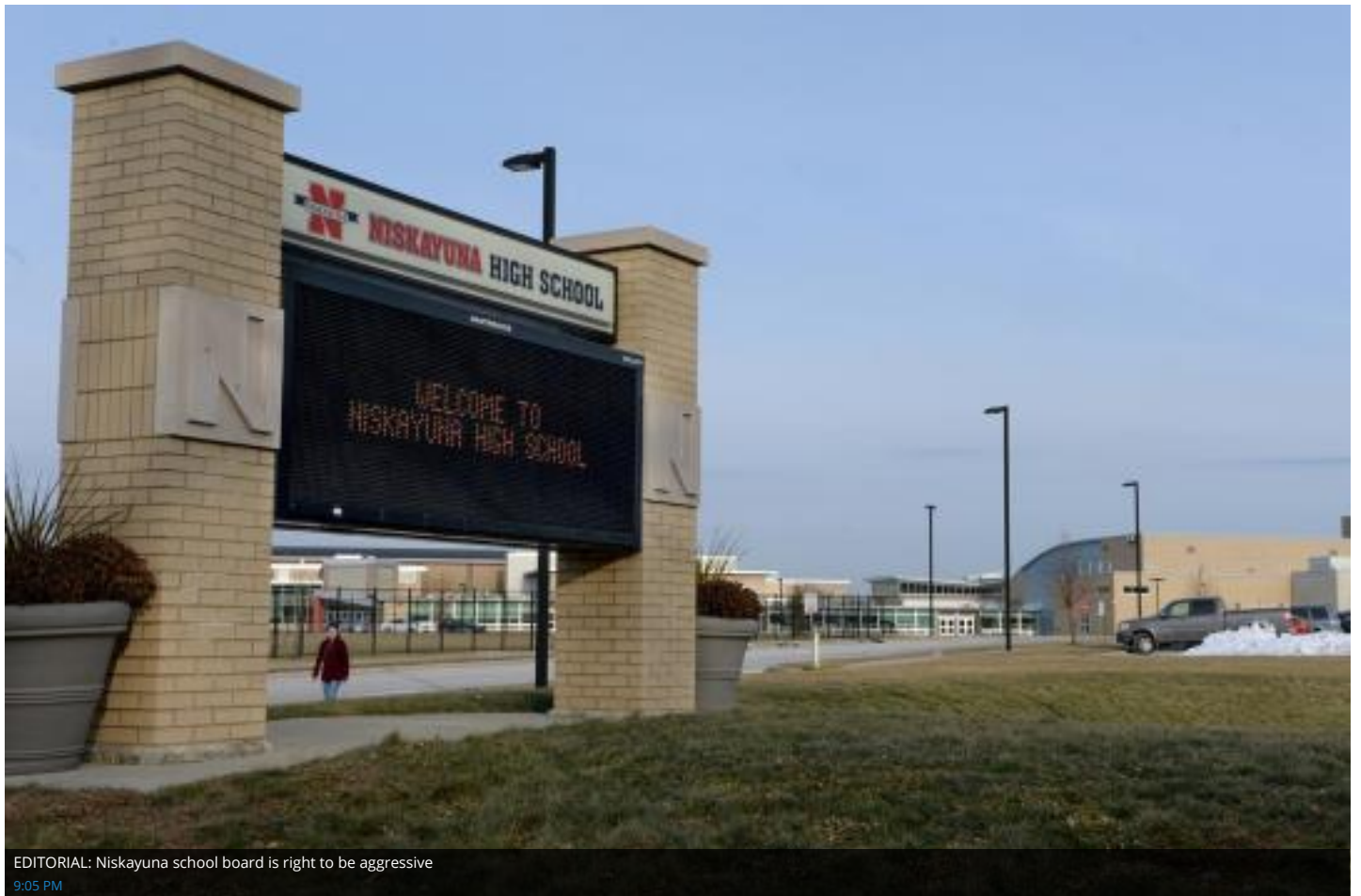


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# Seven candidates seek two open seats on Ballston Spa school board

Staff Report [@zacharydmatson](#) | May 18, 2020



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BALLSTON SPA -- Seven candidates are competing to fill two open Ballston Spa school board seats in the June 9 school board election.

Current vice president Lillian McCarthy is running for re-election. Candidates Susan Filburn, Matthew Dreher, Rebekah Deuel-Jones, Susan Moore, David Newell and Katie Whittemore also will be on the ballot.

Voters will also decide on two ballot propositions: The first will be whether to approve \$968,000 in school bus replacements, and the second will be approving \$58,795 to be collected for the Ballston Spa Public Library.

The June 9 election will take place by absentee ballots only; voters must return their ballots to the district by June 9 at 5 p.m. The two candidates receiving the most votes will be elected to serve three-year terms on the school board beginning July 1. The candidates will be listed on the ballot alphabetically by last name.

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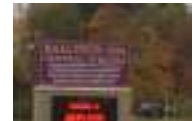


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