

On-Site COVID-19 Rapid Testing Part II

Simple 1-2-3 steps




BH-BL, and school districts across the state, are preparing staff, students, and parents for on-site COVID-19 testing should our region be designated a zone. (As of Dec. 9, Saratoga and Schenectady counties remain undesignated.) As we work together to meet the state's requirements to keep our schools open, our kids learning, and our community safe we are asking for your continued support, cooperation, and patience. Our nurses and school leaders are working together to establish procedures that will help make the on-site testing process go smoothly should we need to begin testing. To make it easier to understand, we've outlined those steps below:

1 YOUR CONSENT IS NEEDED. This week, a fourth question was added to the daily Qualtric Screening Survey. It asks for parental consent to conduct the simple, painless nose swab test on your child. To consent to testing, please check the box on the survey and enter your name on the following line. It's important to know that while testing *is* voluntary, if BH-BL does NOT have at least 20% of its in-school population consenting to testing, the state will close our schools and force us to move to fully remote learning for everyone. Please consider consenting to the test.

2 STUDENTS SELECTED RANDOMLY. A random number has been assigned to students who have parental consent to be tested. Using a random number generator, student numbers will be selected from a database. We anticipate testing at least 10 students a day. Parents will be given advanced notice when their child will be tested. An email from your child's principal will include the day and time your child will be tested. It will also include specific details about testing locations within the school and how parents may choose to be present for testing.

3 COMMUNICATING RESULTS. Results will be available within 15 minutes of administering the test. Parents *will* be notified of the test results. If the results are negative, parents will be notified via email and students will stay in school. If the results are positive, parents will be called and they will need to pick up their child from school as soon as possible. Students who tested positive will be relocated to a separate, supervised area until they are picked up from school. Positive test results will be shared with the local Departments of Health and parents will be provided with next steps.

Preparing Younger Children for Testing Procedures

 If your children seem anxious about the test, it may be helpful if you prepare them for what to expect. Start by letting them know that their school nurse will be wearing a gown and face shield, which is not how they would normally see the nurse dressed. Students will be asked to pull their mask down so that their nose is sticking out. You could also demonstrate how the test will be done by taking a q-tip and swabbing around the very end of your child's nose. Let them know the test may actually tickle.

TESTING FAST FACTS

Tests will only be administered by a school nurse or other qualified health professional.



The test is considered non-invasive. It requires a quick swab of the lower portion of the nostrils. The tests are fast and painless. They are *not* the deep-sinus swab tests.



While reports indicate rapid tests are not necessarily the first choice by medical experts for individual needs, they are a reliable source to gather testing baseline data. The valuable data gathered, ease of use, and rapid results from this test make it the tool of choice for this particular application.



If you would like to give consent for your child to be tested but do not see the question on your Qualtrics Screening, please contact Dan LeClaire at dleclaire@bhbl.org. If you did not give consent, your child's number will *NOT* be entered into the testing database. And your child is still able to attend in-person school.

