

RIVER RIDGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 210

Serving the Communities of Hanover and Elizabeth

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Hanover, IL 61041

“Home of the River Ridge Wildcats”



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River Ridge School District 210 is partnering with the University of Illinois to test students, teachers, and staff members for COVID-19 infection using the University of Illinois' rapid rtPCR test ("SHIELD Test").

WHAT IS SHIELD TESTING?

SHIELD is an innovative, saliva-based test created by the University of Illinois. You can read more about it at <https://www.uillinois.edu/shield>

Why SHIELD testing?

IDPH partnered with SHIELD Illinois to provide testing to participating schools utilizing the SHIELD Illinois saliva-based RT-PCR testing. Screening tests for SARS-CoV-2 are intended to identify infected persons who are asymptomatic and without known or suspected exposure to SARS-CoV-2. Screening tests are performed to identify persons who may be contagious to prevent further transmission. Screening tests can be an effective mitigation strategy, especially in areas with high-to-moderate community transmission.

HOW MUCH DOES THE TEST COST?

It is free for students and staff.

HOW OFTEN WILL TESTING OCCUR?

Testing will occur once a month.

IS SHIELD TESTING MANDATORY FOR STUDENTS?

SHIELD testing is not mandatory. SHIELD testing is highly recommended. Please note that if you do not want your child to participate that you must complete an OPT OUT form. The form is available on the school website.

WHY DOES THE TESTING HAVE TO HAPPEN AT SCHOOL? WHY NOT AT HOME?

Testing must take place in school due to CLIA protocols and to ensure that test takers are not eating or drinking prior to testing.

WHY CAN'T WE EAT OR DRINK ONE HOUR PRIOR TO TESTING?

The test developers say that doing so may provide an invalid sample or inconclusive result.

Test Results and Confidentiality

Families who consent to SHIELD testing will receive access to your child's test results online. River Ridge will also receive results of your child's test and may/will notify you separately of any positive result. All results are confidential and protected under HIPAA and FERPA. The IDPH and Jo Daviess County Health Department will also receive your child's test results, consistent with IDPH guidance and the Illinois Control of Communicable Disease Code.

WHEN WILL RESULTS BE AVAILABLE?

Samples will be taken weekly to a SHIELD Illinois lab in Rockford, IL. Results will generally be available the next day.

HOW WILL I GET MY RESULTS?

If the test is negative, you will not hear from the school district.

If the test is positive, a school nurse or administrator will call the positive individual or their parent/guardian.

Test-to-Stay Procedures

Additionally, testing can be used to keep students in school when identified as a classroom close contact through the *Test-to-Stay* protocol. “This allows students to avoid quarantine by testing on **days one, three, five and seven after exposure** as long as they continue to test negative.” (IDPH). Students and staff who continue to test negative will be permitted to stay in the classroom.

- The ability to engage in the *Test-to-Stay* process is determined by our local health department, as they will assess the level of risk associated with each individual situation.
- The *Test-to-Stay* strategy is only applicable when both the individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 and the close contact were engaged in proper and consistent mask wearing, as recommended by the CDC.

Why is testing done monthly?

Testing at least monthly maximizes our ability to find infections early and break the transmission chain. Testing, in combination with effective contact tracing, will give us the ability to monitor asymptomatic cases and the transmission rates in our buildings. The goal of this testing program, in addition to other mitigation strategies in place in schools, is to keep students learning in the classroom.