

Rainier School District #13

28168 Old Rainier Road | Rainier, OR 97048
Tel: (503) 556-3777 | Fax: (503) 556-3778

November 23, 2021

To the Rainier School District Community:

Today, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Oregon Department of Education (ODE) announced two updates to COVID-19 safety protocols: 1) a new testing program to keep more students in school following an exposure and 2) new rules for outdoor masking:

Test to Stay

OHA's Test to Stay protocol allows unvaccinated students without symptoms to keep attending in-person class during their quarantine period when they test negative. OHA has stated that the risk of transmission is minimized in school settings because of the many layers of safety strategies schools use, including: universal face coverings, physical distancing, cohorting, and maximizing ventilation. Test to Stay is only for unvaccinated asymptomatic individuals who were exposed in school settings where there is universal masking. (Vaccinated students without symptoms are not required to quarantine.)

We're enthusiastic about the forthcoming Test to Stay public health tool because it can keep more students in the classroom and reduce disruption to in-person learning. Our school district team will closely review the guidance from OHA and ODE so we can roll it out in our schools while maintaining high safety standards to protect children and staff.

This new testing program will be a big operational lift and will take time to get off the ground. It will require adequate testing supplies and trained personnel. When we return from Thanksgiving break, our district team will work with county public health authorities on these plans.

Additional testing and screening options

The Test to Stay program is the latest of many COVID-19 testing programs available to schools. Additional testing tools include the Return to School Test, diagnostic testing for symptomatic individuals, and screening testing. As we evaluate our capacity to roll out the Test to Stay protocol, we will be considering how these other tools fit into our plans.

Outdoor Face Covering Requirements

OHA removed the statewide requirement for face coverings in crowded outdoor settings, but they also said that schools may continue to require students and staff to wear face coverings during outdoor activities. We will work with our county health authority to determine what's best for our local community.

Vaccination continues to be one of our best tools to fight the spread of COVID-19 and keep children in school. All children ages five and up are now eligible for a vaccine, and all adults are now eligible for a booster. [Find a vaccination appointment near you using OHA's vaccine locator tool.](#)

Thank you for your continued partnership to keep our schools and community healthy. I hope you have a safe and restful holiday!



Dr. Joseph Hattrick
Superintendent