
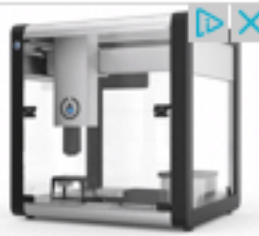


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10 Staten Island schools using saliva-based coronavirus test

Updated Jul 06, 2021; Posted Jul 06, 2021



About 50 New York City public schools, including 10 on Staten Island, are part of a pilot program to use saliva-based coronavirus tests. (John Jones/For NJ Advance Media) John Jones | For NJ Advance Media



By [Annalise Knudson](#) | aknudson@siadvance.com

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. — Ten Staten Island schools are using saliva-based coronavirus (COVID-19) testing during a two-month pilot program that started in June.

Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, which recently ended, students and staff in reopened school buildings were subject to random coronavirus testing to ensure safe in-person learning. Now, about 50 schools citywide are using saliva testing during a pilot program with Rover Labs, using technology developed by Fluidigm Corporation.

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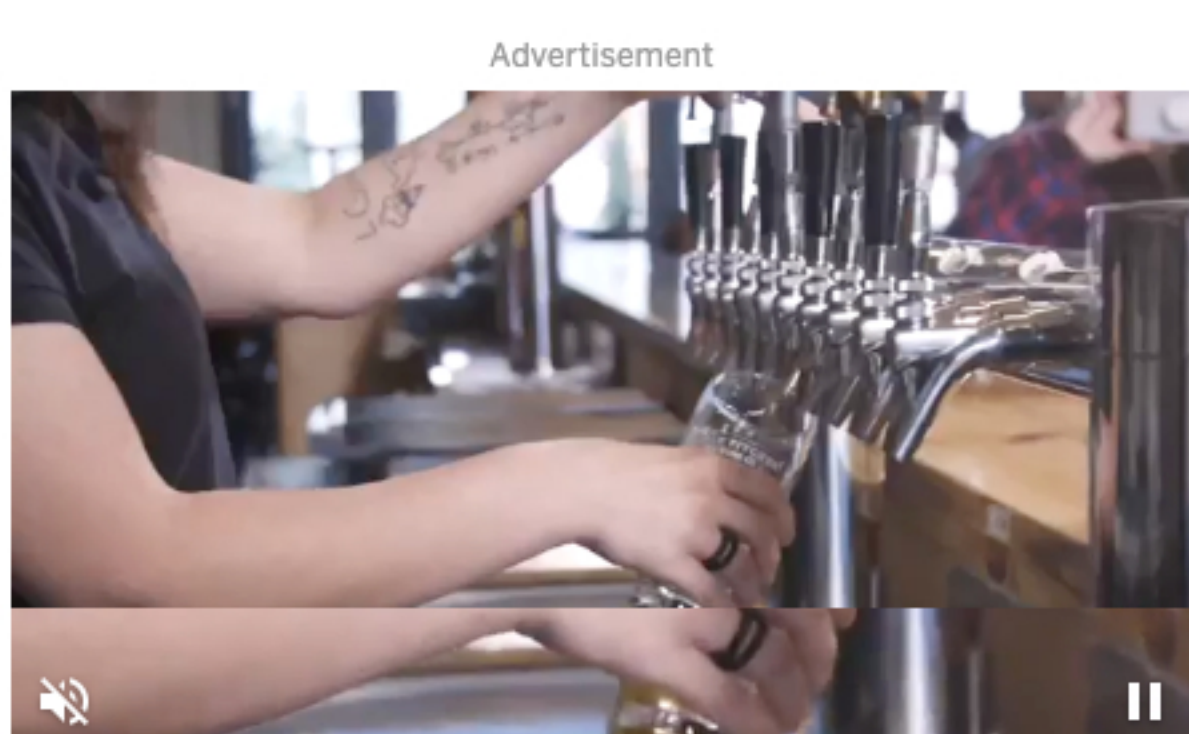


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According to peer-reviewed research, the accuracy of saliva-based COVID-19 testing is comparable to that of PCR nasal swab testing, which involves using a short or long Q-tip inserted into the nose to collect a COVID-19 sample. It takes less than 60 seconds to collect a sample.

“The saliva COVID testing pilot in the NYC DOE [Department of Education] is an important continuation of Rover’s mission to improve the comfort and convenience of testing for both kids and adults, as well as to reduce the cost and complexity of gathering samples,” said Mark Fasciano, CEO of Rover Labs, in a [press release](#).

The saliva testing provides a more comfortable experience than traditional nasal swabs, which is helpful when collecting samples from school-aged children, Rover Labs stated. Test recipients in the pilot program provide their saliva samples through a simple self-collection process overseen by school nurses. The samples are then picked up by Rover Labs and delivered to their partner lab in Eatontown, N.J., for processing. Test results are delivered within 48 to 72 hours.



The two-month pilot program started on June 1 and is continuing at Summer Rising program sites.

Rover Labs said 10 Staten Island schools are participating in the pilot program, however it’s unclear which schools.

“We are very excited to be part of the solution to getting kids back into schools safely and giving parents and teachers peace of mind,” said Fasciano. “The ability for schools to test for COVID-19 simply and seamlessly so that infection can be identified early to keep the student and teacher population safe is essential.”

[Summer Rising is a non-traditional summer school program](#) providing both academic and enrichment opportunities, like field trips, arts and outdoor recreation — open to all New York City youth. [The first day of Summer Rising for students in K-12 is Tuesday.](#)

Students in grades 1 through 8 are required to submit a new coronavirus testing consent form within the first week of attending the program.

Students in grades 9 through 12, District 75, Extended School Year, and ASD Nest programs are covered through the summer months by existing COVID-19 testing consent forms. If no testing consent form was already on file, the student must submit one.

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Staff members were required to consent to testing prior to beginning work at their Summer Rising programs, if they didn’t previously have a consent form on file.

Students in 3-K, pre-K and kindergarten are exempt from testing.

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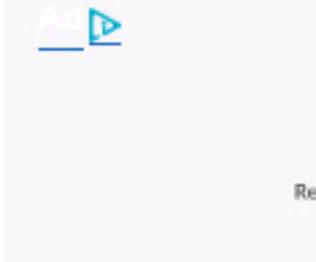


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