

School District Guidance for Increasing and Decreasing Intensity of In Person Instruction, Allegan County



DISCLAIMER: This information was developed based on the latest information, but is subject to change at any time.

Version 9/23/2020

PURPOSE:

This guidance provides support to local health departments in advising school districts of public health risk while making decisions about opening/reopening schools. It is essential to create conditions that enable in person instruction whenever possible as schools contribute to children's growth and well-being by providing educational instruction; supporting the development of social and emotional skills; creating a safe environment for learning; addressing nutritional needs; and facilitating physical activity.

STEP 1:

Allegan County Health Department and School District assess what learning modalities are allowed based on the official Phases in the Mi Safe Start Plan at the Michigan Economic Recovery Region level (see michigan.gov/coronavirus). If a school district overlaps two MERC regions, follow region with lowest Phase level.

STEP 2:

County Risk Determination Level: For school planning, epidemiologic risk is determined at the county level rather than the Michigan Economic Recovery Council Labor Shed Region as schools tend to draw pupils and staff from surrounding community. County epidemiologic indicators are based on **1)** cases per million people over the last seven days, including lab confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 but excluding cases occurring among inmates from Correctional facilities in the community and **2)** percent of all diagnostic tests that were positive each day, excluding testing occurring in Correctional facilities.

If there is a discordance in the risk level based on cases per million or the percent positivity, the higher risk level should be considered.

Decreasing trends in cases per million people or percent or tests that are positive are assessed in the County Risk Determination on a two week intervals, provided that testing levels in the MERC Region are stable and average over 1,515 tests per million people.

Increasing trends in cases per million residents in a county can be identified on the MiSafeMap.info Private Portal using the 3 day case surge indicator. This flag appears when there have been three consecutive days of 10 percent increase in cases per million people. Increasing trend can also be assessed using the case trend if 5 days of sustained increase in the number of average cases per million people in the county. These increases are assessed by the Allegan County Health Department in the context of the outbreaks in the community.

MI Safe Map Risk Levels

LOW	<7 cases per million in county; <3% positive diagnostic tests
A	7 to <20 cases per million; 3 to <7% positive diagnostic tests
B	20 to <40 cases per million; 7 to <10% positive diagnostic tests
C	40 to <70 cases per million; 10 to <15% positive diagnostic tests
D	70 to <150 cases per million; 15 to <20% positive diagnostic tests
E	150 or greater cases per million; >20% positive diagnostic tests

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STEP 2, CONTINUED:

The Allegan County Health Department can rely on the County Risk Indicator for purposes of school planning, and may also use professional judgement to take into account other measures of epidemiologic risks in their community, including

- the percent of cases in the county that are associated with an outbreak
- the number of deaths among county residents (MiSafeMap.info)
- the proportion of emergency department visits for coronavirus like symptoms for the MERC region ([Syndromic Surveillance](#) data)
- COVID hospitalization rates for the MERC region

STEP 3:

Using available data on cases in the community and the association with school buildings, the Allegan County Health Department will work with each school district to determine which column of the chart below their district is in.

The local public health department can make use of case investigation and contact tracing data to assess if buildings in their district have known cases among staff or students in the past 14 days and if the building has evidence of ongoing transmission.

Ongoing transmission in a building is defined as multiple cases (3 or more) among students or staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing (see [Outbreak Definition](#) for more information). Schools should be tracking how and where students and staff are moving throughout the building and who they are interacting with. Consideration should be given as to whether cases within the school building that occur within 14 days of each other actually had contact with one another.

USING THE COLORS:



Proceed with in-person learning.



Risk for more cases has increased. Proceed with caution and consider hybrid learning model.



Risk for more cases is high. Consider all-virtual learning model.

FOOTNOTES FOR GRID:

(1) The guidance in these columns is for consideration by the local health official and school superintendent. School district may take into account operational factors, such as staff and student absenteeism, to make decisions about level of instruction.

(2) The epidemiologic risk level indicator from MiSafeMap.info is the default County Level Risk Determination as described in Step 2 above.

(3) Work with local health department on contact tracing; appropriate closure for cleaning and disinfection.

(4) Work with local health department to consider short suspension of in person instruction (2-5 days) in the building or affected portion of building to ensure contact tracing and determine if ongoing transmission. Review mitigation measures and strengthen if any gaps in implementation are identified.

(5) Work with local health department to consider up to a 14-day suspension of in-person instruction in building or affected portion of building to break transmission. Review mitigation measures and, address gaps in implementation and strengthen mitigation measures where possible.

Mitigation measures: include required measures for Mi Safe Schools: Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap. Strict Mitigation measures include all required/strongly recommended/recommended measures in the Return to School Roadmap, including universal use of cloth face coverings for age four years and older. Cloth facial coverings should be considered and encouraged for children ages 2-3 years. Other innovative approaches to risk reduction may be considered from sources such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) or [Resolve to Save Lives](#).

Reduce density: hybrid instruction approach of some in person and some remote learning to ensure social distancing and learning are both possible.

At high level of community transmission, individual buildings become early indicators of future spread and their status impacts the rest of the district.

School District Guidance Grid for Increasing/Decreasing Intensity of In-Person Instruction, Allegan County



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SCHOOL BUILDING AND DISTRICT SPREAD INDICATORS (1)

No cases in school buildings

Buildings with known cases (3) in staff or students but no ongoing transmission

Buildings with evidence of ongoing transmission (3)

COUNTY LEVEL RISK DETERMINATION (2)

LOW	In person allowed with mitigation measures	In person allowed with strict mitigation measures after cleaning/contact tracing (4)	In person with strict mitigation in affected buildings with cases after an appropriate pause (5)
A	In person allowed with strict mitigation measures	In person allowed with strict mitigation measures after cleaning/contact tracing (4)	Reduce density in affected buildings with cases after an appropriate pause (5)
B	In person allowed with strict mitigation measures	Reduce density in affected buildings after cleaning/contact tracing (4)	Consider reduced density in affected buildings with cases after an appropriate pause (5)
C	In person with strict mitigation measures. Discuss additional innovative mitigation strategies with the local health department.	Consider reduced density in affected buildings after cleaning/contact tracing (4). Discuss additional innovative mitigation strategies with the local health department.	Consider reduced density in affected buildings with cases after an appropriate pause (5). Discuss additional innovative mitigation strategies with the local health department.
D	Consider reduced density with strict mitigation measures. Discuss additional innovative mitigation strategies with the local health department	Consider reduced density in affected buildings after cleaning/contact tracing (4). Discuss additional innovative mitigation strategies with the local health department.	Consider remote instruction in the affected building(s) for 28 days.
E	Consider appropriate pause (14 days) of in person instruction in entire district to discuss additional strategies for protecting student and staff, including but not limited to testing strategies	Consider remote instruction in entire district	Consider remote instruction in entire district