



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Champaign-Urbana Public Health District  
[www.c-uphd.org](http://www.c-uphd.org)

All Champaign-County residents should follow Public Health recommendations. Together, we may potentially reduce the spread of the disease in our community.

While all residents can take steps now, people in high risk categories (e.g., seniors over the age of 60 and individuals with underlying medical conditions) are urged to pay special attention to recommendations to avoid large gatherings of people.

School closures can have a negative impact in our community. We do not expect schools to make these decisions about closing and cancelling events on their own. Schools in Champaign County can seek specific guidance from the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District to determine if, when, and for how long to take these steps. The following considerations will be taken into consideration for school dismissals.

- Healthy children are not known to get seriously ill from COVID-19
- Closing schools may not be effective because some children may congregate anyway, at other locations
- Many parents, such as healthcare workers, need to be at work. If these critical workers stay home with children it causes significant impacts on the healthcare system and other institutions that are essential for our community to function
- If schools close, some children might have to stay home with alternate caregivers, such as seniors, who are more vulnerable
- We don't know how effective children are in spreading the disease
- There are approximately 9,500 students in Champaign County that are enrolled in free and reduced lunch program.

#### **Current Measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19:**

- Review and update comprehensive school safety plans, including continuity plans for teaching and learning if students are absent from school. Considered developing e-learning plans, as feasible and appropriate.
  - Evaluate whether there are students or staff who are at increased risk of severe illness and develop plans for them to continue to work or receive educational services if there are moderate levels of COVID-19 transmission.
- Emphasize common-sense preventative actions for students and staff. For example, emphasize staying at home when sick; appropriately cover coughs and sneezes; routine cleaning of high touch surfaces (e.g., door knobs, phones, hand rails, etc.). Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down by students and staff before each use.
- Review attendance and sick leave policies. Encourage students and staff to stay home when sick. Use flexibility when possible, to allow staff to stay at home to care for sick family members.



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Consider relaxing requirements for doctors notes for children to return back to schools. We need to make sure that our healthcare system is not unnecessarily burdened so they can provide services to those most in need.

- Discourage perfect attends awards and incentives.
- Establish procedures to ensure students and staff who become sick at school or arrive at school are sent home as soon as possible. Isolate the ill students, faculty and staff from others until they can go home.
- Students, teachers or staff who have a travel history over the course of the last 14 days to an area identified by the CDC as level 3 travel health notice (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>) need to practice self-quarantine. Discourage travel in messaging: All persons traveling to areas in the U.S. with confirmed community transmission should monitor their health and limit interactions with others for 14 days after returning from travel.
- Encourage flu vaccine for those persons over 6 months of age who have not had it this season
- Limit all non-essential persons from entering the facility (e.g., interns, volunteers, presenters, etc.)
- Ensure handwashing strategies include handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. Encourage frequent handwashing, especially before lunch.
- Consider temporarily cancelling extracurricular group activities and large events of more than 50 people.

**Measures to be taken when there is community wide transmission (2 or more community transmission cases not in the school)**

- Teachers and staff with fever (>100.4°F) and respiratory infection symptoms should not come to work. Teachers and staff should self- screen for respiratory infection symptoms ((i.e., check themselves for subjective fever and respiratory symptoms such as cough) each morning before interacting with students.
  - Ensure sick leave policies allow teachers and staff to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- Restrict visitations, and prohibit those with symptoms of fever and respiratory infection and those who have a travel history over the course of the last 14 days to an area identified by the CDC as Level 3 Travel Health Notice from entering the school. Discourage travel in messaging: All persons traveling to areas in the U.S. with confirmed community transmission should monitor their health and limit interactions with others for 14 days after returning from travel.
- Consider alternates to congregate or group programming within the school including any large or communal activities such as assemblies. Alternate approaches which limit close contact may include conducting assemblies via webcasts or intercom announcements.



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- Consider implementing staggered recess times to limit the number of students who are together; and if possible, group recess by classrooms.
- Consider relaxing requirements for a doctor's note for the child to return to school after illness.
- Some children and staff may be at higher risk for severe illness because of underlying health conditions or a weakened immune system. Public Health advises implementation of e-learning plans for these individuals.
- If schools remain open during a pandemic, divide school classes into smaller groups of students and rearrange desks so students are spaced at least 3 feet (98) from each other in a classroom
- Consider regular health checks (e.g., temperature and respiratory symptoms screening) of students, staff, and visitors (if feasible).

#### **Measures to be taken when there is one case at school among students, staff or faculty**

- In consultation with the local public health department, the appropriate school official may consider if school closure is warranted and length of time based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer (potentially 14 days)
- Closing schools is a difficult decision as it has impacts on families and employers. The IDPH and CUPHD will continue to assess the situation and provide information as needed.
- Discourage students and staff from gathering or socializing anywhere
- During school dismissals, childcare programs and schools may open for staff members (unless ill), while students stay home, after cleaning of high touch surfaces at the school has been performed. Keeping facilities open a) allows teachers to develop and deliver lessons and materials remotely, thus maintaining continuity of teaching and learning; and b) allows other staff members to continue to provide services and help with additional response efforts