



COUNTY OF DUTCHESS
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

MEMORANDUM

To: County Public School Superintendents
From: Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health
Date: February 22, 2021
RE: CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools and Related Guidance

On February 12th the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided an updated [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation](#). This guidance supports the importance of continued mitigation strategies to reduce risk of disease transmission in school settings. All schools are directed to continue with the following mitigation strategies:

- Mandatory universal and correct use of masks
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy faculties
- Contact tracing and optional diagnostic testing
- Quarantining and isolation when required

The CDC states that in communities with [low or moderate rates of transmission](#), K-12 schools may open for full in-person instruction and should implement physical distancing of 6 feet or more to the greatest extent possible. Levels of community transmission are defined as total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days (low, 0-9; moderate, 10-49; substantial, 50-99; high, ≥ 100) and percentage of positive tests in the past 7 days (low, $<5\%$; moderate, 5-7.9%; substantial, 8-9.9%; high, $\geq 10\%$). Dutchess County tracks these important metrics and will provide both on our [COVID-19 Community Impact Dashboard](#). School districts should reference our dashboard to monitor these indicators and take necessary mitigation steps based on the rate of transmission within our community. When transmission rates are low or moderate, it is appropriate to consider using a variety of risk mitigation strategies when 6 feet of social distancing is not possible or practicable. Some of these additional strategies may include:

- Use of physical barriers (such as plexiglass);
- Increased ventilation and improved air filtration; and
- Surveillance testing programs.

Dutchess County continues to observe very low rates of disease transmission in school settings, which remains a testament to the success of the risk mitigation strategies that have been in place for many months. We look forward to our continued partnership to keep Dutchess County schools safe and open for in-person instruction.