

CDC's Updated School Guidance

March 19, 2021

Note: The definition of close contact does NOT change. Anyone within 6 feet for 15 minutes of someone with COVID-19 will need to quarantine.

The [updates](#) reflect current knowledge and are brought forth to assist schools in opening in-person instruction and remaining open.

Key Information

Continue to use and layer prevention strategies:



Masks



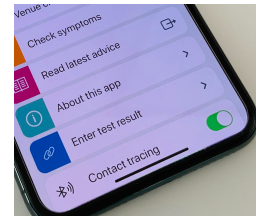
Physical Distance



Handwashing & Respiratory Etiquette



Cleaning



Contact Tracing (I & Q)

Schools should prioritize mask use and physical distancing to the maximum extent possible.

Physical Distancing:

Middle and high school classroom

- Students should be **at least** 3 feet apart in areas of low, moderate, or substantial community transmission.
- In high community transmission, students should be **at least** 6 feet apart, if cohorting is not possible.

Elementary classroom

- Students should be **at least** 3 feet apart

**In order for the 3ft in classroom guidance to be safe for a community to implement, excluding students most at risk for infection by a known case (those within 6ft for more than 15 minutes), is necessary.*

Determine Community Transmission: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>

CDC Recommends Using

- Number of new cases per 100,000 persons in the last 7 days AND
- Percentage of nucleic acid amplification tests (including PCR) that are positive during the last 7 days

Indicator	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days ²	0-9	10-49	50-99	≥100
Percentage of NAATs that are positive during the past 7 days ³	<5.0%	5.0%-7.9%	8.0%-9.9%	≥10.0%

If two indicators suggest different levels, take the actions corresponding to the higher threshold.

Maintain at least 6 feet in the following settings

- When masks can't be worn, such as **when eating**
- During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as **singing, shouting, band, or sports and exercise**. These activities are not recommended indoors.
- Between adults and between adults and students, at all times in the building.

Other changes:
Clarified ventilation
Removed recommendation for physical barriers
By federal order masks are required on school buses