

COVID-19 NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Department Provides Return to School Framework

DUPAGE COUNTY— The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) is releasing a “Return to School Framework” with the DuPage Regional Office of Education (DuPage ROE). As COVID-19 cases continue to rise locally, the “Return to School Framework” recommends that school officials review and consider the level of disease activity in their communities as they make decisions about if and when to shift between learning models this school year. DCHD has been working closely with the DuPage ROE and school district administrators in DuPage County to help inform plans for safely reopening schools this fall.

“Reopening schools is complicated, as is providing guidance for a virus we are still learning about. This framework will help school officials and parents understand when it is appropriate to transition to more in-person learning,” said Karen Ayala, DuPage County Health Department Executive Director.

“As we begin the school year, our school leaders have resources from IDPH and the DuPage County Health Department that will allow them to make decisions to keep our students, teachers, and families healthy and safe,” said Dr. Darlene Ruscitti, Superintendent, DuPage County Regional Office of Education.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) encourage school administrators to make decisions about school reopening in collaboration with local health officials. The health and safety measures recommended for schools by IDPH and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) are important tools to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in a school setting. The success of these measures, however, is also dependent on the level of COVID-19 activity in the communities where our students, teachers, staff, and families live, learn, work, pray, and play.

In addition to county-level metrics and COVID-19 surveillance data, school-level considerations are important as well, such as case and outbreak activity, specific trends and distribution of cases, absenteeism among students and staff within a school, and alternate remote learning site options and safety protocols.

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In every learning model, school districts are also advised to follow the health and safety protocols set forth by IDPH, ISBE, and DCHD.

To view the DCHD Return to School Framework, visit www.dupagehealth.org/ReturnToSchool.

DCHD will post the current level of Community Transmission weekly each Friday afternoon on the DuPage County Health Department Website at: <https://www.dupagehealth.org/595/Schools-and-Daycares>.

As of today, the level of COVID-19 Community Transmission in DuPage County is “Moderate.”

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