

Indicators for In-person Instruction in Yellowstone County Schools

These four indicators will help Yellowstone County public health officials & education leaders make recommendations about in-person school instruction. Recommendations for suspension of in-person instruction will be considered when three out of four metrics are red.

Metrics

Weekly case mix & clusters: Increases in new cases in children under 19 & clusters within schools

GREEN

Stable case mix with few increases in new cases involving children under age 19 & rare clusters within schools

YELLOW

Increasing cases involving children under age 19 & significant clusters within schools

RED

Significant increases of cases involving children under age 19 & widespread clusters within schools

Capacity of healthcare & public health systems: Includes staffing, timeliness of contact tracing, supplies, testing capacity, hospital beds, active cases in service area, etc.

GREEN

Operating as expected, normal capacity

YELLOW

Needs are beginning to outpace capacity

RED

Stressed operations, critical concerns

Weekly average daily case count per 100,000: The number of cases per day, divided by 161,300 (population of Yellowstone County), multiplied by 100,000, averaged over a 7-day period.

GREEN

Less than 10 new cases per 100,000 for 2 consecutive weeks

YELLOW

Ten to 25 new cases per 100,000 for 2 consecutive weeks

RED

Greater than 25 new cases per 100,000 for 2 consecutive weeks

Weekly positivity rate: Number of weekly positive tests divided by the number of tests conducted that week.

GREEN

Less than 5 percent for 2 consecutive weeks.

YELLOW

Five to 10 percent for 2 consecutive weeks

RED

Greater than 10 percent for 2 consecutive weeks



If COVID-19 levels increase steadily within color bands, increased measures will be considered. For more information on COVID-19 status, visit the Yellowstone County COVID-19 dashboard at: <https://riverstonehealth.org/public-health-preventing-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-status/>

Risk Reduction Strategies for Yellowstone County Schools

These are possible risk reduction strategies for school administrators to consider implementing to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

GREEN

**Minimal
Community Transmission**
(3 out of 4 metrics are green)

- Require face coverings, physical distancing, & limit activities where social distancing is not feasible
- Sick students must stay home
- Provide clear messages & flow charts to parents about when children should remain at home & when they should return to school after illness
- Provide parents with the definition of a close contact & what parents should do if their child is a close contact of someone testing positive for COVID-19
- Identify each school's COVID-19 Point of Contact for school personnel & families

YELLOW

**Increased
Community Transmission**
(Mix of various colored metrics)

- Cohort groups maintained in class schedules & during lunch to limit exposure
- Hybrid schedules: part online, part in person
- Staggered scheduling: Monday & Tuesday cohort; Wednesday all online to allow deep cleaning & added ventilation; second cohort Thursday & Friday
- In-person grades K-5; shift to online for grades 6-12
- Limit in-person instruction to students who need supportive services or have special needs
- If unable to contact trace effectively, shift to more broad mitigation, including quarantining larger cohorts, classrooms, teams or schools
- Require testing of all students with COVID-19 symptoms OR require 10-day absence from illness onset if not tested
- Consider outbreak testing if cluster is identified in cohorts, classes, or teams

RED

**Substantial
Community Transmission**
(3 out of 4 metrics are red)

- Consider suspension of in-person instruction until yellow level maintained on a 7-day average basis
- Activate remote learning
- Continue essential student support including meals & student engagement

Sources Consulted to Develop Metrics & Strategies

References:

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