

**Proposed Indicators and Thresholds for Risk of Introduction
and Transmission of COVID-19 in Schools**

| Community Transmission → Risk of COVID-19 Introduction | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Core Indicators | Lowest risk of introduction | Lower risk of introduction | Moderate risk of introduction | Higher risk of introduction | Highest risk of introduction |
| Number of new cases per 100,000 persons within the last 14 days | <5 | 5 to <20 | 20 to <50 | 50 to <200 | >200 |
| Percentage of RT-PCR tests that are positive during the last 14 days | <3% | 3% to <5% | 5% TO <8% | 8% TO <10% | >10% |
| School Transmission | | | | | |
| Core Indicators | Lowest risk of transmission | Lower risk of transmission | Moderate risk of transmission | Higher risk of transmission | Highest risk of transmission |
| Ability of the school to implement 5 key mitigation strategies: 1. Staff and students stay home when sick 2. Consistent and correct use of masks 3. Social distancing to the largest extent possible 4. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette 5. Cleaning and disinfection | Implemented all 5 strategies correctly and consistently | Implemented all 5 strategies correctly but inconsistently | Implemented 3-4 strategies consistently and correctly | Implemented 1-2 strategies correctly and consistently | Implemented no strategies |
| Contact tracing in collaboration with the Health Department | | | | | |

When deciding to open, close, or reopen schools, CDC recommends the use of 3 core indicators – two measures of community burden (number of new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 14 days; and percentage of RT-PCR tests that are positive during the last 14 days) **AND** one self-assessed measure of school implementation of key mitigation strategies.

The community indicators are a measure of the level of community transmission. While increasing community burden increases the **risk of introduction** of SARS-CoV-2 to a school (because of increased community transmission), the **risk of transmission within the school** is dependent on the implementation of the **5 key mitigation strategies** within each school.

If community transmission is low but school mitigation strategies are not implemented, then the risk of subsequent transmission of the virus in a school will increase once it is introduced by a teacher or student. Alternately, if community transmission is high, but school mitigation strategies are implemented and strictly followed as recommended, then the risk of subsequent transmission of the virus in a school will be lower, even when the risk of introduction may be high.

Vigilance to mitigation strategies within schools and in the community will reduce **the risk of introduction and subsequent transmission** of SARS-CoV-2 in schools regardless of baseline indicators – with risk of spread especially low when community transmission is low to begin with.