

# Determining community mitigation measures in schools

*As the level of COVID-19 community transmission changes in our region, schools should reconsider their current community mitigation measures.*

The Virginia Department of Health is using health district planning regions to track the level of COVID-19 community transmission and trends over time. Richmond and Henrico are a part of a large Central Region that includes localities from the North Carolina border up to Hanover County and from Buckingham County and Charlotte County in the west to Surry County in the east. As the Central Health District Planning Region transitions between different levels of community transmission, schools and school districts should reconsider their current community mitigation measures.

**Note:** If there is evidence of sustained transmission in an *individual* school or throughout a school district, the health department may recommend the closure of a school regardless of the current level of *community* transmission.

## ↑ Community transmission is increasing

See below for guidance for transitioning up to each level of community transmission and the community mitigation measures schools and school districts should consider.

### MODERATE → SUBSTANTIAL: Community transmission has increased to substantial

If the level of community transmission in the Central Health District Planning Region has increased to **substantial**, and is accompanied by a trend of increasing cases for two or more weeks, school districts should begin conversations with the Health District about moving to remote learning as the primary method of instruction, as described in [Phase I Guidance for Virginia Schools](#).



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## LOW → MODERATE: Community transmission has increased to moderate

If the level of community transmission in the Central Health District Planning Region has increased to **moderate**, and is accompanied by a trend of increasing cases for two or more weeks, schools and school districts should begin conversations with the Health District about increasing community mitigation measures. This includes offering remote learning options for older students, strengthening distancing measures among staff, and ensuring that staff adhere to guidance—for their own safety.

While in-person instruction can continue for certain students at this level, schools and school districts should begin thinking through procedures and communication plans for moving to remote learning as the primary method of instruction if community transmission continues to increase.

## NONE → LOW: Community transmission has increased to low

If the level of community transmission in the Central Health District Planning Region has increased to **low**, and is accompanied by a trend of increasing cases for two or more weeks, schools and school districts should continue monitoring community transmission levels while encouraging students and staff to wear cloth face coverings, socially distance, practice good hand hygiene, and maintain other accepted methods of community mitigation.

Increased mitigation efforts and proactive engagement with staff and caregivers at this level can help schools and school districts continue in-person instruction and prevent the need for more significant mitigation measures if community transmission levels continue to increase.

## ↓ Community transmission is decreasing

See below for guidance for transitioning down to each level of community transmission and the community mitigation measures schools and school districts should consider.

## SUBSTANTIAL → MODERATE: Community transmission has decreased to moderate

If the level of community transmission in the Central Health District Planning Region has decreased to **moderate**, and is accompanied by a trend of decreasing cases for two or more



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weeks, schools and school districts should begin conversations with the Health District about lessening some community mitigation measures, including considering returning younger students to in-person instruction.

At this level, schools and school districts should begin thinking through procedures and communication plans for resuming in-person instruction as the primary method of instruction for most students if community transmission continues to decrease.

## MODERATE → LOW: Community transmission has decreased to low

If the level of community transmission in the Central Health District Planning Region has decreased to **low**, and is accompanied by a trend of decreasing cases for two or more weeks, schools and school districts should begin conversations with the Health District about returning to in-person instruction as the primary method of instruction.

## LOW → NONE: Community transmission has decreased to none

If the level of community transmission in the Central Health District Planning Region has decreased to **none**, and is accompanied by a trend of decreasing cases for two or more weeks, schools and school districts should continue to monitor community transmission levels and may consider lessening community mitigation measures.



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