

COVID-19 SCHOOL GUIDANCE



Return-to-Learn Interim Guidance

Saginaw County 2021-2022 School Year
For School Leaders and Administrators

Updated August 9, 2021

In-person learning IS our shared priority since it has been clearly shown to provide the greatest benefit to our county's youth. The purpose of this interim guidance is to help our education partners deliver in-person learning consistently and safely during the upcoming school year. It is meant to support school districts in planning for a successful return to the classroom this fall and to ensure that COVID-19 prevention and mitigation measures are implemented in a way that fosters optimal learning while simultaneously ensuring health and safety for the overarching school-district community (students and staff alike).

We are basing our preliminary recommendations on current data, trends, and knowledge about COVID-19. This will likely change and evolve as COVID-19 changes – especially current and potential variants and availability of vaccination for younger age groups.

Scalability and layering are key themes.

Monitoring Community Transmission & COVID-19 Activity

The Saginaw County Health Department (SCHD) will provide ongoing monitoring of county transmission rates in Saginaw County and the surrounding region. This will help us advise school superintendents and administrators in making informed and educated decisions that are best for district operations, students, and staff. SCHD will provide updates and adjust recommendations based on the CDC's predesignated indicators and thresholds for [community transmission of COVID-19](#).



Table 1. CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19¹

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%

¹If the two indicators suggest different levels, the actions corresponding to the higher threshold should be chosen. County-level data on total new cases in the past 7 days and test percent positivity are available on the County View tab in [CDC's COVID Data Tracker](#).

²Total number of new cases per 100,000 persons within the last 7 days is calculated by adding the number of new cases in the county (or other community type) in the last 7 days divided by the population in the county (or other community type) and multiplying by 100,000.

³Percentage of positive diagnostic and screening NAATs during the last 7 days is calculated by dividing the number of positive tests in the county (or other administrative level) during the last 7 days by the total number of tests resulted over the last 7 days. Additional information can be found on the [Calculating Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 \(SARS-CoV-2\) Laboratory Test Percent Positivity: CDC Methods and Considerations for Comparisons and Interpretation](#) webpage.

Local Guidance for Implementation of COVID-19 Prevention Strategies

The following list provides the baseline prevention strategies recommended for consistent and continuous prevention of COVID-19 transmission in the school setting:

- Exclusion due to illness (Staying home when sick)
- Promoting vaccination
- Adequate ventilation
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Contact tracing and isolation for positive cases
- Cleaning and disinfecting

The following list provides the “layered” and “scalable” prevention strategies recommended for implementation in the school setting when transmission levels rise in the school community:

- Consistent and correct mask use
- Physical distancing (minimum of 3 feet)
- Cohorting
- Screening and testing
- Contact tracing paired with isolation and quarantine

SCHD advises schools to implement these prevention strategies in a layered and measured approach. Layering multiple strategies provides increased safety and protection for staff and students. This hopefully allows schools to remain flexible and poised to maintain a safe and healthy environment in the event that community transmission increases or a new variant strain emerges that poses greater risk or causes more severe illness among children.

The following table provides guidance and recommendations on how districts may consider implementing prevention strategies.



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COVID-19 Prevention Strategies	CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19			
	LOW	MODERATE	SUBSTANTIAL	HIGH
Staying home when sick	X	X	X	X
Promoting vaccination	X	X	X	X
Adequate ventilation	X	X	X	X
Handwashing and respiration etiquette	X	X	X	X
Isolation for positive cases (with quarantine for all household members)	X	X	X	X
Cleaning & disinfection	X	X	X	X
Masking for all (per CDC)	X	X	X	X
Contact tracing and notification			X	X
Quarantine for close contacts (7 days with negative PCR test)			X	X
Physical distancing – 3ft minimum			X	X
Cohorting				X
Testing for athletes				X

***Face Masks** must be worn during school-supported transportation. CDC order applies to all public transportation including bussing operated by public and private school systems.

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		School Building and District Spread Indicators		
		No cases in school buildings	Building(s) with known cases in staff/students but no ongoing transmission	Building(s) with evidence of ongoing transmission
County Level Risk Determination	LOW	Low/Moderate Layers	Low/Moderate Layers	Low/Moderate Layers
	MODERATE	Low/Moderate Layers	Low/Moderate Layers	Increase Layers Where Transmission Has Occurred
	SUBSTANTIAL	Layers (1 or more) Implemented	Increase Layers (2 or more)	Increase Layers District Wide
	HIGH	Increase Layers (1 or more)	All Layers Implemented	All Layers Implemented

Example Implementation of Above Guidance & Recommendations for School Activities & Functions




The following is for example purposes only, but may provide ideas for implementation, clarity for recommended activities at corresponding community transmission thresholds, and guidance for application to unique school district operations.

School districts should consider the make-up of their personnel and student bodies when making final decisions for implementation. Consideration should be given to current vaccination status, vulnerability of populations served, abilities to consistently support and integrate prevention strategies.

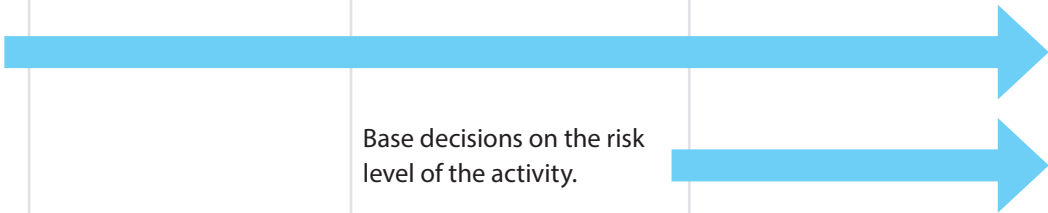

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School Activities/Functions	CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19			
	LOW TRANSMISSION	MODERATE TRANSMISSION	SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION	HIGH TRANSMISSION
Curriculum instruction format	In-person instruction supported as primary.	In-person instruction supported as primary.	In-person instruction supported; may encompass remote instruction in isolated classrooms and/or buildings.	Continue to prioritize in-person instruction as able with guidance from SCHD. May consider transitioning to remote instruction.
Food service & cohorting	Small group activities take place, normal classroom & recess activities occur, etc.	Consider limiting crowded and/or poorly ventilated indoor activities.	Avoid crowded and/or poorly ventilated indoor activities.	Cohort greatest extent possible.

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School Activities/Functions (cont.)	CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19			
	LOW TRANSMISSION	MODERATE TRANSMISSION	SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION	HIGH TRANSMISSION
Cleaning & disinfecting	Districts adhere to normal cleaning and disinfecting protocols for maintaining health and safety.			
			Increase cleaning frequency for high touch surfaces.	
Transportation	Follow CDC order for face mask requirements and ventilation guidance.			
				Decrease bus occupancy; cohort families; distance passengers.
Visitors & guests	Visitors and guests allowed in buildings.	Visitors and guests allowed in buildings.	Limit visitors and guests to essential for student health, safety and wellness.	Limit visitors and guests to essential for student health, safety and wellness; move to virtual connections where able.
			Required completion of health screening upon entry and masking while indoors.	Required completion of health screening upon entry and masking while indoors.

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School Activities/Functions (cont.)	CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19			
	LOW TRANSMISSION	MODERATE TRANSMISSION	SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION	HIGH TRANSMISSION
Athletics	Practices and competitions permitted.	Practices and competitions permitted; prioritize outdoor activities as much as possible.	Competitions may be paused; practices focus on skills building with increased social distancing required.	Competitions and practices may be paused. Consider testing to support ongoing play. Base testing frequency on the sport's risk level. *See CDC guidance
Extra-Curricular Activities	Extracurricular activities proceed as scheduled.			
Meetings & Conferences	School meetings and conference attendance takes place.	 Increased social distancing in meeting space recommended for unvaccinated individuals.	Limit meetings in- person, increased social distancing. Consider virtual platforms for meetings and conferences.	In-person meetings/conferences suspended. Virtual platforms prioritized.

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School Activities/Functions (cont.)	CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19			
	LOW TRANSMISSION	MODERATE TRANSMISSION	SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION	HIGH TRANSMISSION
Positive Case(s)	Report positive cases to SCHD. Send parent letter to homes to notify of potential exposure (see examples). Monitor child. No quarantine required. However, in the event of 2 or more students in a classroom testing positive, quarantine (7 days) is REQUIRED for close contacts.			
Quarantine <i>Notes: follow the close contact definitions as described in the contact tracing section.</i>	Not required.* *Except for outbreak (2 or more cases in classroom that are not household members.)	Not required.* *Except for outbreak (2 or more cases in classroom that are not household members.)	Recommended.* *Except for outbreak (2 or more cases in classroom that are not household members.)	Required. Quarantine all close contacts for 7 days with a required negative test upon return and continued self monitoring for 14 days.
Contact Tracing, Isolation & Quarantine	<p>Work with SCHD to support robust case investigation and contact tracing. Provide educational support for students and families who are impacted by isolation and quarantine. Any positive student or staff is to isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms (or positive test), be fever free for at least 24 hours, and have significant improvement in symptoms upon return to the school building(s). Their household members <u>should</u> quarantine for 7 days with a required negative test upon return.</p> <p>When transmission is substantial or high, perform contact tracing for each positive case and provide reporting to SCHD.</p> <p><i>Notes: "Close contact" will be determined by current school operations and policies for masking and social distancing. For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No masking required -- close contacts within 6 ft of positive individual. Fully vaccinated individuals do not quarantine unless symptomatic. • Face masks implemented – close contacts less than 3 ft of positive individual. Individuals 3 to 6 ft may continue to attend school as long as they do not have any symptoms. Fully vaccinated individuals do not quarantine unless symptomatic. 			
Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette	Hand washing and proper cough/sneeze etiquette is prioritized. Reminder and education provided to all students and staff, with extra emphasis on education for preK-5 at year beginning. Hand washing to be supported throughout day, with focus on pre- and post-meal periods, recess, and restroom use. Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content will be available in classrooms and other student/staff locations (main office, cafeteria, entrances)			

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School Activities/Functions (cont.)	CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19			
	LOW TRANSMISSION	MODERATE TRANSMISSION	SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION	HIGH TRANSMISSION
Student & Staff Health Screening	<p>Recommend all staff and students complete daily health screenings. Do NOT report to school if sick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students: parents/guardians complete daily student wellness check prior to sending student to school. Students should adhere to school policy for reporting illness and return to school post-illness. Staff: conduct daily wellness self-check prior to reporting to work. 			
Vaccinations	<p>District promotion of vaccination is highly recommended for all eligible staff, students and families. SCHD will support vaccination resources including, education, information, and clinics.</p>			

Additional Guidance, Resources & Reference Materials

Recommendations and prevention categories and strategies identified previously correspond and are based upon the following MDHSS & CDC guidance documents.

MDHHS issued a brief guidance document on June 25, 2021. <https://www.michigan.gov/documents/coronavirus/COVID->

CDC guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K) -12 Schools. Updated July 9, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

MMWR. Disparities in Learning Mode Access Among K-12 Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic, by Race/Ethnicity, Geography, and Grade Level. Issued June 29, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7026e2.htm>

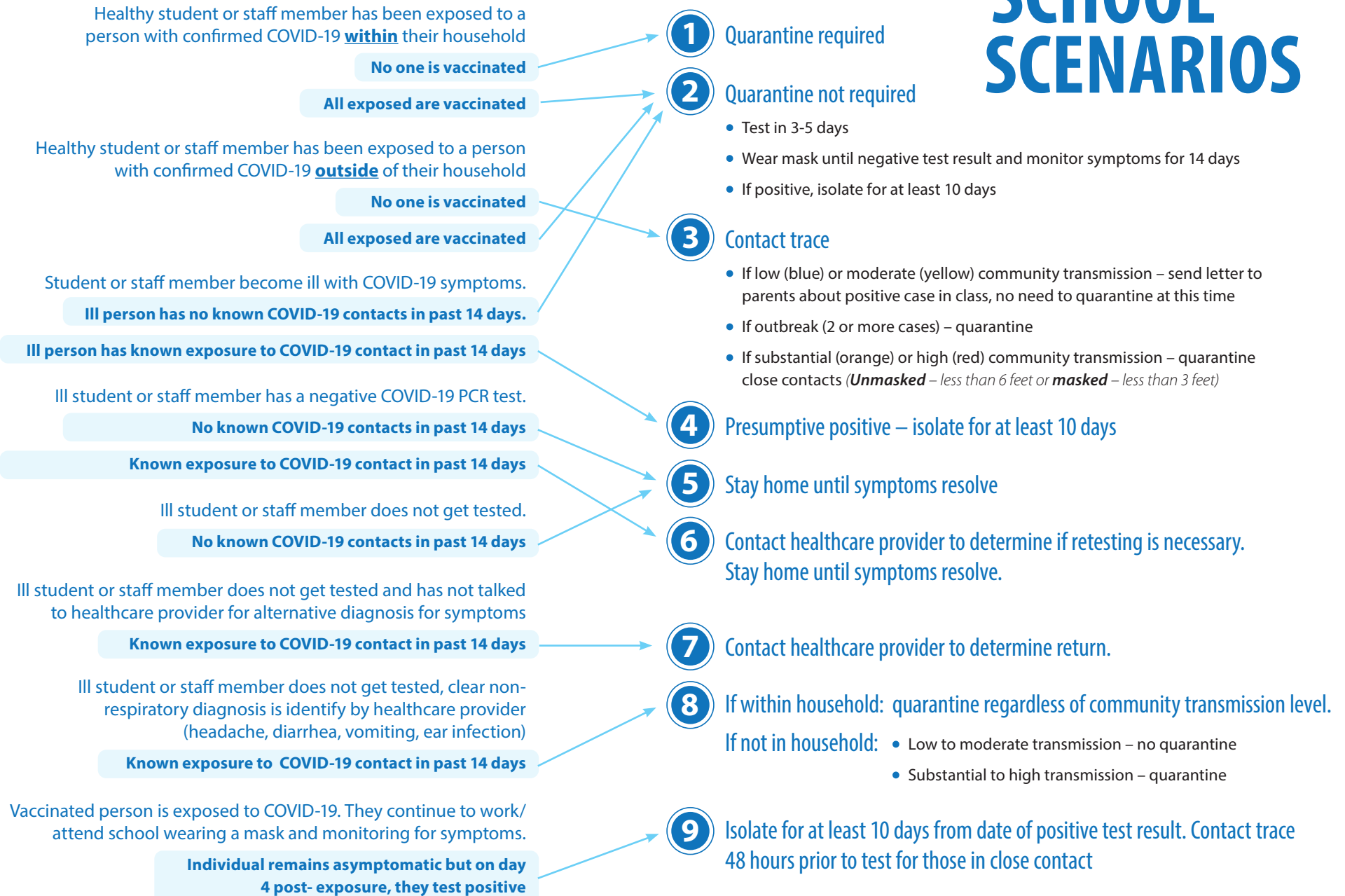
Science Brief: Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs – Updated July 9, 2021. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/transmission_k_12_schools.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fmore%2Fscience-and-research%2Ftransmission_k_12_schools.html#print

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SCHOOL SCENARIOS

SCENARIOS

ACTIONS



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What is Legally Required and What is Recommended to Keep Your Schools Healthy

REQUIREMENTS (like seatbelts)	PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS* (like motorcycle helmets)
Masking for all on buses per CDC Order	Encourage COVID-19 vaccinations along with all others
Report suspected and confirmed COVID-19 (and all other reportable diseases, outbreaks, unusual occurrences) to the health department as specified under Michigan Administrative Code R. 325.173(9)	Layered prevention strategies, including: Universal indoor masking for teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status, per CDC
Post COVID-19 case counts on your website as per MDHHS Epidemic Order, Reporting of Confirmed and Probable Cases of COVID-19 at Schools	Physical distancing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between unvaccinated students: at least 3 ft. if masking, 6 ft. if not masking • Between unvaccinated staff or unvaccinated staff/student: 6 ft.
Keep employees sick with or exposed to (if unvaccinated) to COVID-19 home as required by Public Act 339	Testing for athletes during high (red) transmission
Exclude children ill with communicable illness (such as COVID-19) from school as specified under Michigan Administrative Code R 325.175 (2):	Cohorting during high (red) transmission
Assist LHD with contact tracing as specified under Michigan Administrative Code R. 325.174(2)	Ensure proper ventilation
	Encourage proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette
	Regular cleaning and disinfection
	Exclude non-employee close contacts from all school grounds and activities during quarantine (employees required to be excluded per PA 339)
*Recommendations per the CDC, MDHHS, and local health departments	

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Why should you do what is *recommended*?

Under the Revised School Code, public schools have a responsibility to provide “for the safety and welfare of pupils while at school or a school sponsored activity or while *en route* to or from school or a school sponsored activity” ([MCL 380.11a](#)).”

Why you should do what is *required*?

For individuals who do not report as required, or who impede public health in its duty to implement and enforce laws to protect the public’s health, these sections from the Michigan Public Health Code apply:

[333.1291 Obstruction of person enforcing health law](#)

A person shall not wilfully oppose or obstruct a department representative, health officer, or any other person charged with enforcement of a health law in the performance of that person’s legal duty to enforce that law.

[333.1299 Violation as misdemeanor; prosecution](#)

- (1) A person who violates a provision of this code for which a penalty is not otherwise provided is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- (2) A prosecuting attorney having jurisdiction and the attorney general knowing of a violation of this code, a rule promulgated under this code, or a local health department regulation the violation of which is punishable by a criminal penalty may prosecute the violator.

Furthermore, teachers and administrators are [certified](#) in Michigan. Certain criminal convictions may result in denial, suspension, or revocation of the certificate by the State Superintendent [[MCL 380.1535a](#)].



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COVID-19 Reporting Form

Is the case symptomatic? ☐ yes ☐ no

Name of positive case: _____

Address: _____

Date of birth: _____

Positive test date: _____

Phone: _____ County of Residence: _____

Dates of attendance: _____

(dating back 2 days, or 48 hours, from the date of diagnosis)

Grade: _____ Building: _____

Teacher (if student): _____

District: _____

Is this 1st case in classroom?

- ☐ **yes** (if yes, see contact list below. Notify contacts that they do not need to quarantine but have been exposed.)
☐ **no** (if no, see contact list below)

If 2 or more in same classroom, determine who the positive case has had close contact within the last 2 days at school:

(Report only those who were less than 3 feet apart, for at least 15 minutes if masked. If unmasked report those less than 6 feet.)

Contact Name	DOB	Address/City/Zip	Phone Number(s)	Alternate Phone	Date of Last Contact

Submit via email to: Chillman@saginawcounty.com