

SCHOOL CLOSURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the injunction, Public Health Madison & Dane County (Public Health) does not currently have authority to close schools. We will review individual school data and continue to monitor data in the Dane County community to determine potential classroom, individual school, and/or countywide closure recommendations.

This document provides some additional guidance to consider, both to support schools with their own decision-making and to increase understanding around Public Health's process for determining possible school closure recommendations.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Recommendations

School Closure Considerations: Individual Classrooms

According to DHS recommendations, school administrators should consider temporarily halting in-person instruction in an **individual classroom** when:

- Individual classrooms need to be cleaned and disinfected and no additional rooms are available.
- Contact tracing is being conducted to identify close contacts and additional cases within the classroom/cohort, especially when multiple cases need to be traced.
- Other outbreak mitigation measures were implemented, and were ineffective at halting transmission between classmates.
- A teacher is absent, and a substitute teacher cannot be hired for the full length of the anticipated absence.
- A greater number of students in the classroom are absent than present.

School Closure Considerations: Individual Schools

According to DHS recommendations, school administrators should consider temporarily halting in-person instruction in an **individual school** when:

- The number of absences among teachers or school staff is impeding student instruction, ability to provide student lunches, or other vital school functions.
- A greater number of classrooms or student cohorts are absent than present.
- School wide cleaning and disinfecting needs to be conducted.
- Contact tracing is being conducted to identify close contacts and additional cases from multiple classrooms/cohorts, especially when multiple cases need to be traced.
- Other outbreak mitigation measures were implemented, and were ineffectual at halting transmission between classmates.

It is important to remember that, while not required, schools can choose to close a classroom or an entire school for various reasons, including but not limited to any of those stated above.

Public Health Madison & Dane County Considerations for County-wide Closure Recommendations

Both individual school and countywide closure recommendations are based on several factors, including but not limited to:

- Number and trend of positive cases
- Extent of exposure
- Contact tracing capacity

Public Health Madison & Dane County may also recommend closure based on school and/or community data. Currently, due to the injunction, DHS is the only governing body that can close schools in Dane County.

In the event of a classroom or school closure, designated school staff should consult their assigned Public Health Site Investigator.

Reference our [K-12 School Requirements & Updated Recommendations](#) during COVID-19 for more information.