



# Vestal Central School District

## CDC and NYSDOH Updated Guidance

Board of Education Meeting  
April 19th, 2021

# March 19th - CDC “Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention”

## Summary of Recent Changes

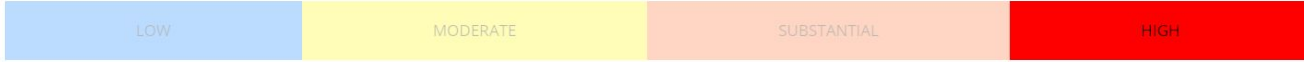
Updates as of March 19, 2021

- Revised physical distancing recommendations to reflect at least 3 feet between students in classrooms and provide clearer guidance when a greater distance (such as 6 feet) is recommended.
- Clarified that ventilation is a component of strategies to clean and maintain healthy facilities.
- Removed recommendation for physical barriers.
- Clarified the role of community transmission levels in decision-making.
- Added guidance on interventions when clusters occur.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>


# CDC Covid Data Tracker

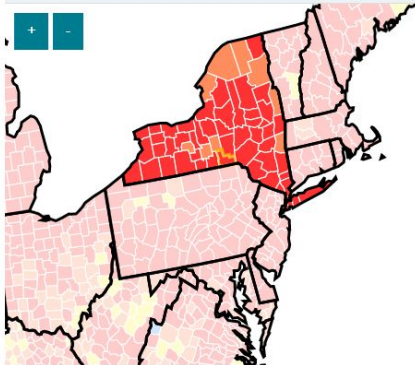
## Level of Community Transmission in Broome County, New York



Map Data:

Time Period: Fri Apr 09 2021 - Thu Apr 15 2021

Back to U.S. Map 



Current 7-days is Fri Apr 09 2021 - Thu Apr 15 2021 for case rate and Thu Apr 08 2021 - Wed Apr 14 2021 for percent positivity. The percent change in counties at each level of transmission is the absolute change compared to the previous 7-day period.

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>

## March 19th - CDC “Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention”

Table 1. CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19<sup>1</sup>

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 <sup>2</sup>	0-9	10-49	50-99	≥100 <sup>**</sup>
Percentage of NAATs that are positive during the past 7 days <sup>3</sup>	<5.0%	5.0%-7.9%	8.0%-9.9%	≥10.0%

**\*\***Broome County: 171 new cases per 100,000 persons in the last 7 days.

# March 19th - CDC “Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention”

## Table 2. Recommended Prevention Strategies for K-12 Schools and Levels of Community Transmission

Prevention Strategies: All Schools			
<p>All schools implement 5 key prevention strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal and correct use of masks required</li> <li>• Physical distancing</li> <li>• Handwashing and respiratory etiquette</li> <li>• Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities</li> <li>• Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine</li> </ul>			
Prevention Strategies by Level of Community Transmission			
Low Transmission <sup>1</sup> Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
<p><b>Elementary Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet between students in classrooms</p>		<p><b>Elementary Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms</p> <p>Cohorting<sup>2</sup>: recommended when possible</p>	
<p><b>Middle and High Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet between students in classrooms</p>		<p><b>Middle and High Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms</p> <p>Cohorting recommended when possible</p>	<p><b>Middle and High Schools</b> Schools that can use cohorting: at least 3 feet of distance</p> <p>Schools that cannot use cohorting: at least 6 feet distance between students in classrooms<sup>2</sup></p>
<p><b>Sports and extracurricular activities</b> Sports and extracurricular activities occur with at least 6 feet of physical distance to the greatest extent possible<sup>3</sup></p>	<p><b>Sports and extracurricular activities</b> Sports and extracurricular activities occur with at least 6 feet of physical distance required<sup>3</sup></p>	<p><b>Sports and extracurricular activities</b> Sports and extracurricular activities occur only if they can be held outdoors, with more than 6 feet of physical distancing<sup>3</sup></p>	



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>

## March 19th - CDC “Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention”

Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
<b>Elementary Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms  Cohorting <sup>2</sup> recommended when possible	
<b>Middle and High Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms  Cohorting recommended when possible	<b>Middle and High Schools</b> Schools that can use cohorting: at least 3 feet of distance  Schools that cannot use cohorting: at least 6 feet distance between students in classrooms <sup>2</sup>

# April 9th - NYSDOH “Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency”

## p. 8 - NYSDOH references CDC changes to physical barrier recommendations

- The CDC no longer recommends physical barriers for mitigation where physical distancing cannot be maintained. A preferred approach is enhanced ventilation and air filtration to dilute and remove any SARS-Cov-2 particles from the air as described below and in the CDC school guidance.

## p.8 - NYSDOH references CDC tables and indicator levels

- CDC has developed four levels of indicators and threshold for community transmission of COVID-19. Please refer to Table 1 in the CDC guidance to see the measures. CDC also provides recommendations for physical distancing and cohorting for elementary, middle, and high schools at each level of transmission. These recommendations are summarized below and are required to be adhered to by any responsible parties when implementing physical distancing of less than six feet in classrooms. Please refer to Table 2 in the CDC guidance for more detail.
- In counties with high risk of transmission, elementary schools can maintain physical distancing of at least three feet between students in classrooms and cohorting is recommended when possible. However, in middle and high schools three feet between students in classrooms is recommended only when schools can use cohorting. **When schools cannot maintain cohorting, middle and high schools must maintain physical distancing of at least six feet between students in classrooms.**



# April 9th - NYSDOH “Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency”

p.9 - NYSDOH states the following:

- Prior to making any change to reduce physical distancing to less than six feet between students during academic instruction, decisions must be made with community input. **Responsible Parties must include opportunities for feedback from parents, community members, teachers, staff and local departments of health. This meeting must be held before any change to the physical distancing in schools can be made.**
- Responsible parties must post the new plan online and must be sent to Local Health Departments and the State Education Department.
- Responsible Parties are required to work with the school community (parents, teachers, staff, LHDs, etc.) to propose and adopt changes. **Ultimately, the school/district’s decision to move to shorter physical distances will come down to a local community’s risk tolerance based on its unique circumstances.**



# April 19th - Broome County Department of Health statement

Broome County Health Department Statement regarding NYSDOH Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

April 19, 2021

As stated in the April 9, 2021 *INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY* “Responsible Parties are required to work with the school community (parents, teachers, staff, LHDs, etc.) to propose and adopt changes. Ultimately, the school/district’s decision to move to shorter physical distances will come down to a local community’s risk tolerance based on its unique circumstances”. **The Broome County Health Department will support schools in their decision as we are seeing the lowest COVID-19 transmission rates since fall of 2020 in Broome County.** All cases that are associated with a school district will be tracked closely to ensure there is no in-school transmission. If the school and local health department feel there is transmission of COVID-19 within a school, plans will need to be modified.

## **Vestal CSD “Unique Circumstances”**

- Broome County has the lowest transmission rate since last fall
- No reported transmission within Vestal CSD schools
- Working cooperatively with Broome County and Tioga County Health Departments for safety protocols, screening and contact tracing
- Increase in local vaccination rate

# How do we move VHS 9-12 to 4 or 5 days a week in-person?

**Option - follow NYSDOH:** Local community “risk tolerance” indicates community is supportive of moving to shorter physical distances (from 6ft - 3ft). Collect community risk tolerance feedback through a [Survey](#) Review and evaluate results to inform decision-making.

OR

**Option - follow CDC :** County transmission level reduces from “high transmission” (red) to “substantial transmission” (orange)

Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
<b>Elementary Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms  Cohorting <sup>2</sup> recommended when possible	
<b>Middle and High Schools</b> Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms  Cohorting recommended when possible	<b>Middle and High Schools</b> Schools that can use cohorting: at least 3 feet of distance  Schools that cannot use cohorting: at least 6 feet distance between students in classrooms <sup>2</sup>