Updated 11-5-2020

**Protocol: Presence of multiple cases in the school or district**

If there is more than one confirmed COVID-19 case (students or staff) in the school at one time, or if there is a series of single cases in a short time span, school leaders and the superintendent should work with the local board of health to determine if it is likely that there is transmission happening in school.

For each individual case, **FOLLOW STEPS UNDER:** “Protocol: Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19.” **Note that when there is one isolated case, the student’s close contacts will need to stay home and be tested, not the whole school.**

When there is suspected in-school transmission **beyond one cohort or a small number of cohorts,** school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps should include a review of the specific COVID-19 public health metrics for the municipality and could lead to, **for example,** making a decision to a) close part of the school or the entire school for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) close the school partially or fully for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period.

Should there be circumstances where there are multiple cases in multiple schools, school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps. These steps should include a review of the specific COVID-19 public health metrics for the municipality and could lead to, **for example,** making a decision to a) shut down the district for a short time (e.g. 1-3 days) for an extensive cleaning or other facility mitigation, or b) shut down the district for the longer duration of a 14-day quarantine period.

**Before a final decision is made on a school or district closure, the superintendent must consult with DESE for further guidance.**

**Contact the DESE Rapid Response Help Center at 781.338.3500**

If the decision is made to close for some number of days, the school and/or district should send clear information and instructions to families and staff:

Informing them that it is possible COVID-19 is being transmitted in the school and/or district
Noting that there may be more potential cases that are not yet symptomatic
Recommending students quarantine and not have contact with others
Reminding families of the importance of not having contact with higher-risk individuals (e.g., grandparents)
Reminding families of the list of COVID-19 symptoms for which to monitor
Ensuring that remote learning is immediately provided to all students

Before bringing students back to school:

Check inventory levels of needed supplies (e.g., disposable masks, soap, hand sanitizer, cleaning products); re-order replacement inventory

Consider a school-wide refresher training on the importance of correct hygiene procedures (masks, physical distance, handwashing)

Reiterate the critical nature of masks, physical distancing, and hand hygiene when students return to school

Revised 9-14-2020