As Michigan reopens its schools, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is committed to providing updates of COVID-19 outbreaks in education settings for the public’s general awareness. In honor of this commitment, beginning on Monday, September 14, 2020, MDHHS will publish school-related COVID-19 outbreak data at [https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98163\_98173\_102480---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0%2C9753%2C7-406-98163_98173_102480---%2C00.html).

Given the finite resources and demand of public health during this unprecedented crisis, MDHHS supports local health departments’ intuition to focus its resources on responding to outbreaks in a timely manner and engaging in continuous preparedness activities to prevent and control others. Thus, this reporting will happen on a weekly basis, rather than daily.

The school-related COVID-19 outbreak data is submitted to MDHHS by local public health departments as part of a larger, weekly local situation report that describes COVID-19 outbreak data across various settings within their respective jurisdiction. Data published on the web will provide the public with a general understanding of where school-related COVID-19 outbreaks are being addressed. The publicly available information will include the following line items:

* County
* School Name
* School Address
* School Grades
* School-Specific Case Count
* Case Type (Staff, Student, or Both)

The school-related COVID-19 outbreak data will be accompanied on the web with the following preamble:

*The tables below provide information about school-related COVID-19 outbreaks, as reported by local health departments each week to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.*

*In accordance with the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists’* [*outbreak definition*](https://preparedness.cste.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Educational-Outbreak-Definition.pdf)*, schools that have been found by their local health department to have two (2) or more COVID-19 cases who may have shared exposure at the school grounds and are not from the same household (with the exception of dorms and off-campus housing) are included.*

*If your child’s school is listed, your local health department and school are investigating and will contact you directly if you or your child was possibly exposed to coronavirus at school. Please note that students or staff who were exposed to COVID-19* ***outside*** *of the school grounds AND are not thought to have spread the disease in the school grounds (due to quarantine, self-isolation, etc.) are* ***not*** *included in the data below.*

*Many factors, including the lack of ability to conduct effective contact tracing in certain settings, may result in underreporting of outbreaks. This information does not provide a complete picture of school outbreaks in Michigan and the absence of identified outbreaks in a school in no way provides evidence that, in fact, that school is not experiencing an outbreak.*

*Michigan schools are working hard to maintain a safe environment while also providing quality education. Should you have questions or concerns about this information, please contact your school.*

*Wearing a mask (covering mouth and nose), social distancing (maintaining a distance of 6 feet apart), frequent handwashing (using soap for 20 seconds or hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol), and following* [*capacity restrictions of social gatherings*](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0%2C9753%2C7-406-100467_100913---%2C00.html) *are some of the most effective ways to slow the spread of COVID-19. If you, or someone close to you, are sick or have symptoms, you can* [*get tested*](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0%2C9753%2C7-406-99891_99912-531745--%2C00.html)*.*

***This page will be updated on Mondays by 3 p.m.***

FAQS

1. **Why are the schools not reporting COVID-19 outbreaks directly to MDHHS (like skilled-nursing and long-term care facilities)?**

In addition to the potential to violate law (e.g., Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), schools are not well-suited to comprehensively report school-related COVID-19 outbreaks. Local health departments are uniquely positioned to take on this outbreak reporting role given its staff expertise, resources, and relationship with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

1. **Why are individual school-related cases not being reported?**

Given the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, reporting outbreaks presents itself as a single, straight-forward metric to highlight potential concern as it relates to controlling the spread of disease.

Also, MDHHS aims to, as much as possible, prevent data being used to spur additional instances of students bullying their peers thought to be sick with COVID-19.

1. **How is this data being collected?**

School-related COVID-19 outbreak data is being reported on a weekly basis by all local health departments to MDHHS as part of a larger, situation report that describes outbreaks across various settings in their respective jurisdiction.

1. **Does the school-related COVID-19 outbreak data include cases associated with before and after school programs?**

Yes, if the before or after school program is located on school grounds and formally associated with the school, it will be included in the school-related COVID-19 outbreak data. Note that cases associated with before and after school programs will be included in the overall case count for the associated school (i.e., it will not have its own line item in the data).

1. **Would this be where sports-related outbreaks would appear?**

Yes, if the sports are school-sponsored and happen on school grounds, it will be included in the associated school’s overall case count (i.e., it will not have its own line item in the data).

1. **Will schools be removed from the list if they have not had a new case in 14 days?**

In accordance with the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists [definition of outbreak resolution](https://preparedness.cste.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Educational-Outbreak-Definition.pdf), schools will be removed for the list when there are no new confirmed or probable COVID-19 cases identified after 28 days (i.e., two incubation periods) have passed since the last known school exposure from a case.

1. **What actions do schools need to take once an outbreak has been identified?**

Schools will work with its local health department to determine mitigation strategies based on the circumstances of the outbreak.