

Dear school partners,

Recent data has shown that cases are increasing again in King County. In addition to information about this increase, this week’s Public Health—Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Childcare Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Key indicators of COVID-19 activity
 - a. Accessing the key metric: Dashboard navigation
 - b. Localized data
2. Reminder: Review and share [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#)
3. Preparing for an increase in local COVID-19 cases
4. New COVID-19 testing sites
5. School-based COVID-19 testing strategies
6. New K-12 sports guidance

1. Key indicators of COVID-19 activity

The following chart includes King County data aligned with key indicators of COVID-19 activity outlined in the [Decision Tree for Provision of In Person Learning among K-12 Students at Public and Private Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) released by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). The following is data as of **October 7, 2020**. This data is available and regularly updated on the PHSKC [COVID-19 data dashboard webpage](#).

Current King County COVID-19 Activity Level:		MODERATE
Education Modality:	Recommend distance learning as described above . In addition, consider expanding in person learning to elementary students. Over time, consider adding hybrid in person learning for middle or high school students if limited COVID transmission occurs in schools.	
Extracurricular:	Strongly recommend canceling or postponing all in-person extracurricular activities. Consider low risk activities when all students have some level of in person learning	

Activity Level Key:	Low	Moderate	High
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Indicator	Target/Range		Current Status
Cases/100K/14 days ¹	High	>75 cases/100K/14 days	72 cases/100K/14 days
	Moderate	25-75 cases/100K/14 days	
	Low	<25 cases/100K/14 days	
Trend in cases and hospitalizations ²	Flat or decreasing		Cases: Increasing Hospitalizations: Flat
Test positivity ³	<5%		2.6%

¹Total number of cases for the last 14 days per 100,000 residents.

²Total number of cases for the last 14 days per 100,000 residents **AND** Rate hospitalization per 100,000 residents in the past 14 days compared to the prior 14 days.

³Percent of COVID-19 tests with positive results over the past 14 days

a. Accessing the key metric: Dashboard navigation

PHSKC's [Key indicators dashboard of COVID-19 activity](#), updated weekly on Wednesdays, highlights total cases for the last 14 days per 100,000 residents, the primary County-level indicator in the Department of Health's (DOH) [Decision Tree for Provision of In Person Learning among K-12 Students at Public and Private Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). Given the mobility of residents throughout King County (where they live and where they are employed), we recommend looking at the county-level data on number of cases per 100,000 over 14 days rather than the more localized data.

b. Use of localized data

Local data and trends may be used to fine-tune approaches and possibly slow down the introduction of new cohorts to ensure readiness and system capacity for responsiveness. The [Daily COVID-19 Outbreak Summary](#) allows you to view data by geography. Note that the geographic divisions in these reports may not perfectly align with school district boundaries.

2. Reminder: Review and share [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#)

Based on the current levels of COVID-19 community transmission in King County, we expect to see cases in schools as they re-open for some in-person services. It is imperative that schools prepare themselves to respond appropriately and in alignment with State and local guidance, including the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#). We have developed a [7-minute training video](#) and [slide deck](#) to help you navigate the toolkit. **Please share these resources widely with staff that are supporting your COVID-19 mitigation and response.**

3. Preparing for an increase in local COVID-19 cases

After a decreasing trend in the number of cases since late July, cases have been increasing in King County over the past several days. One of our key indicators for schools is newly reported COVID-19 cases for every 100,000 King County residents over the past 14 days. From last week to this week, our counts for this metric jumped from 53 to 72 cases per 100,000 residents over the past 14 days.

Younger people under the age of 40 represent the largest proportion of cases. Neighborhoods and cities in South King County along the I-5 corridor continue to experience the highest positivity rates in the County. King County is continuing to increase the number of COVID-19 testing locations that are open to all and we're adding more sites in south King County (see section 4 below).

Schools should consider slowing or holding reopening plans if the trend continues to increase. The county metric is the primary driver while local city data can be used to fine tune these plans. More information on school reopening measures [can be found here](#). As you consider your ongoing re-opening and remote learning plans, please proactively collaborate with local childcare partners to coordinate care needs for the students and families you serve.

We have been successful in slowing spread, and we can do it again. We also encourage everyone to get a flu shot as vaccination helps prevent influenza and preserves healthcare resources.

4. New COVID-19 testing sites

Please share with your networks: There are two new free high-capacity COVID-19 testing sites opening in Tukwila and Federal Way in the coming days. These sites complement two recently launched testing centers in Renton and Auburn, increasing access to testing across our community. These sites will expand efforts to control the spread of COVID-19 in a disproportionately affected region of King County and are open to anyone, regardless of insurance. Public Health – Seattle & King County recommends that anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or close contact with someone who has COVID-19 be tested right away. Stay home and away from others while you are waiting for test results. Visit <https://www.chifranciscan.org/freetesting> for more details on scheduling and registration at these two sites.

- The **Tukwila** testing center opened Oct. 6, and is located at The Church by the Side of the Road, at 3455 S. 148th St.
- In **Federal Way**, the testing site will open Tuesday, Oct. 13. It will be located at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center.

5. School-based COVID-19 testing strategies

As you may be aware, the federal government is sending Point of Care Antigen Testing (Rapid Tests) to states. We don't have any guidance at this time about the use of these tests in schools. We are awaiting more information from federal and state officials. Currently, antigen testing in school settings is not recommended by CDC.

If schools in King County are interested in adopting testing strategies, we are open to talking with them about their plans. A significant amount of planning and infrastructure will need to be put in place. Systems would need to be established to notify those tested of the results, provide necessary guidance and/or confirmatory testing, and to ensure that results are automatically reported to public health databases.

6. New K-12 sports guidance

Governor Inslee's office released updates to their [Professional Sports & Other Sporting Activities COVID-19 Requirements](#) that impact K-12 sports. In short, sports are divided into risk categories that align with the phases of the Governor's Safe Start plan and County COVID activity level (based on new cases per 100,000 residents over the previous 14 days). See guidance starting on page 2 for additional information.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and commitment to the health and safety of the students and staff you serve,

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force

