

Sector Email 3.18.2021

Subject header: Updates on COVID-19 from Public Health - Seattle & King County (PHSKC)

Schools

Dear school partners,

Many school districts have spring break rapidly approaching, and with many more people (including school staff) eligible for vaccination, it may be tempting to leave the state for vacation. Despite the great news about decreasing cases and increased vaccination, the safest choice is still avoiding non-essential travel. But with the sun showing up more and more in our region, there's plenty of (socially distant) fun to be had right here in our backyard!

Reminder: please review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#), [related resources](#), and [training videos](#).

This week's Public Health—Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Child Care Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Key Indicators of COVID-19 Activity
2. CDC Guidance Updates
3. Vaccine Updates
 - a. How school and child care staff can access vaccines
 - b. Getting Vaccinated Resources
 - c. Signs and Symptoms Following Vaccination
4. COVID Community Vaccination Event Planning Workbooks
5. Environmental Health after Extended Closures
6. CDC Recommendations for Ventilation in Schools and Child Care Settings
7. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
8. Events
 - a. Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19
9. Spring Break and Travel
10. Now that You're Vaccinated...
11. School and District Town Hall Meetings
12. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours

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 document titled [Tools to Prepare 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 are data as of **March 18, 2021**. These data are available and regularly updated on the PHSKC [COVID-19 data dashboard webpage \(links to specific data points are included in the following chart\)](#).

Current King County COVID-19 Activity Level:		MODERATE
Education Modality:	Phase in in-person learning. Prioritize Elementary (pre-K-5) if they are not already receiving in-person learning, and Middle School. If schools can demonstrate the ability to limit transmission in the school environment, add more high school students when case rates are below about 200/100K/14 days.	
Extracurricular:	Extra-curricular activities must follow K-12, applicable Safe Start protocols and Governor’s proclamations on COVID-19.	
Transition:	Across all COVID-19 Activity Levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When trends in cases and hospitalizations are flat or decreasing, and the school can demonstrate the ability to limit transmission in the school environment, expand access to in-person learning When trends are increasing, pause expansion of additional in-person learning and maintain access to in-person learning for those who have it. Schools are not required to reduce in-person learning or revert to remote learning based on metrics if the school can demonstrate the ability to limit transmission in the school environment. Consider other health and education risks and benefits to children and their families At any COVID-19 level, transition temporarily to full distance learning for 14 days when school meets criteria in DOH’s K-12 Health and Safety Guidance (p 16) or on recommendation of the local health officer. 	

Activity Level Key:	Low	Moderate	High
----------------------------	------------	-----------------	-------------

Indicator	Target/Range		Current Status
Cases/100K/14 days ¹	High	>350 cases/100K/14 days	90 cases/100K/14 days
	Moderate	50-350 cases/100K/14 days	
	Low	<50 cases/100K/14 days	
Trend in cases and hospitalizations ²			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cases: Stable Hospitalizations: Decreasing
Test positivity ³	High	>10%	2.2% ³
	Moderate	5-10%	
	Low	<5%	

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—**Test positivity is reported with a 3-week lag, due to reporting delays**

2. CDC guidance updates on 3/19/21

- a. Today CDC issued revisions to its [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation](#) guidance. Changes include:
 - i. Revised physical distancing recommendations.
 - ii. Clarified the role of ventilation.
 - iii. Removed recommendation for physical barriers.
 - iv. Clarified the role of community transmission levels in decision-making.
 - v. Added guidance on interventions when clusters occur.
- b. PHSKC is waiting for the state DOH to conduct its review of the data and evidence and revise state-level K-12 guidance accordingly. We will align our resources to updated K-12 guidance. *For now, the expectation is for K-12 to follow the [current DOH K-12 guidance](#) as required by [law](#).*

3. Vaccine updates

a. How School and Child Care staff can access vaccines

The following are suggestions for school and childcare staff to access vaccination.

- i. The [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program](#) is *prioritizing* vaccination of school staff and child care workers during the month of March. Pharmacies participating in this program will likely have the most vaccine supply and the greatest ability to vaccinate school and child care staff quickly. Use the [COVID Vaccine Finder](#) to find and schedule an appointment through the federal Retail Pharmacy Program.
- ii. Through OSPI and Kaiser Permanente's [Get Ready](#) program partnership. You can sign up for appointments through Kaiser Permanente at [this link](#) or by reviewing the [Get Ready Program FAQ](#).
- iii. Use the online ["Phase Finder" tool](#) to confirm your eligibility and schedule an appointment at locations that have appointments available. The phase finder is available in many languages - translated Phase Finder tools are [available at this link](#). Paper versions of the tool are available on the [partner resources page](#).
- iv. You may also find vaccination appointments at pharmacies using [VaccineFinder](#). This site lists some pharmacies that are not in Phase Finder yet.
- v. Some school districts, health care providers, or counties may host clinics specifically for schools and childcare workers. [OSPI's Q&A document](#) describes some opportunities that may be available specifically to educators.

b. Getting Vaccinated Resources

The FDA has authorized a third COVID-19 vaccine, made by Johnson & Johnson. This vaccine was shown to be 85% effective in preventing severe illness and only requires one dose. [Learn more here](#).

The Public Health [Getting Vaccinated](#) page now has links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. The [Vaccine FAQ](#) page answers many common questions about COVID vaccine, and includes links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

c. Symptoms after Vaccination

With more school and child care employees receiving vaccines, questions have come up about if individuals need to quarantine if they experience symptoms of COVID-19 soon after receiving a vaccination. Employees may return to work and *not* quarantine if they have symptoms of COVID-19 within a few days of vaccine administration, **IF:**

- They **have not** been in contact with someone with COVID-19 **AND**
- They feel well enough and are willing to perform normal activities such as work **AND**
- They do not have a fever **AND**
- Signs and symptoms are **limited only** to those observed following COVID-19 vaccination (including pain, swelling, tiredness, chills, headache – [see a list of symptoms](#)) **AND**
- They **do not** have other signs and symptoms of COVID-19, such a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or change in smell and taste.

Public Health provides information on this and other frequently asked questions on our [Vaccine FAQ page](#).

4. COVID-19 Community Vaccination Event Planning workbooks

Many schools and districts are interested in hosting their own vaccination events. These workbooks aim to assist your organization with planning a Community Vaccination Event at a large, indoor space where people can walk up and get vaccinated. Planning tasks for opening and operating a Community Vaccination Event are explained, and links to external resources are included to help you prepare to provide COVID-19 vaccine to your community. There are two versions—one focused on employers and businesses and one focused on community-based organizations and faith-based organizations.

- [Workbook for businesses and large employers \(PDF\)](#)
- [Workbook for community-based and faith-based organizations \(PDF\)](#)

5. Environmental Health after Extended Closures

The US EPA has released two factsheets on ensuring water safety following extended closures of schools and child care facilities. These factsheets provide guidance on maintaining drinking water quality during extended closures and recommends start-up procedures when reopening to ensure that drinking water is safe for consumption. The fact sheets can be found at the following links:

[Ensuring Drinking Water Quality in Schools During and After Extended Closures](#) and [Ensuring Drinking Water Quality in Child Care Facilities During and After Extended Closures](#).

6. CDC Recommendations for Ventilation in Schools and Child Care Programs

Ventilation is one component of maintaining healthy environments, and is an important COVID-19 prevention strategy for schools and child care programs. Along with other prevention measures, ventilation can reduce the likelihood of spreading disease. [Visit this link](#) to learn about ways you can improve ventilation in you school or childcare program. In addition, Public Health provides technical assistance to schools and child care partners who are interested in learning how to improve ventilation. Contact schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov with “Ventilation” in the subject line to get additional support from subject matter experts.

7. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care

The pandemic continues to rage on, harming not only our physical health, but also devastating jobs. Many people are finding themselves in sudden need to health insurance. There is now a [Special Enrollment Period for](#) free or low-cost insurance through Washington's Affordable Care Act health exchange – *Washington Healthplanfinder*. The enrollment period is open from **Feb. 15-May 15, 2021**. The enrollment period is open to anyone who is currently uninsured. Public Health – Seattle & King County has a team of [Health Insurance Navigators](#) available to help answer questions and walk through the process of applying and selecting the right insurance plan. You can also browse plans and sign up directly through [Washington Healthplanfinder](#).

8. Upcoming events

a. Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19 updates, risk reduction, and resources:

- i. Con Confianza y En Comunidad: Hablando sobre COVID-19 y temas que nos afectan
 1. Martes a las 5:00 PM en español
 2. Pagina del [Condado de King](#) en Facebook
- ii. Biweekly Community Partners' Call to hear updates and ask questions:
 1. Every other Monday at 4:00 PM in English
 2. Next call on Monday, March 15th at 4:00 PM
 3. Join via Zoom: <https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/93431287120>

9. Spring Break and Travel

With case rates dipping and spring break just around the corner, many schools have been asking Public Health about updated guidance regarding travel and quarantine for those people who are fully vaccinated. The CDC's recent guidance for individuals who have been fully vaccinated does *not* include any changes to quarantine following travel.

The safest option is to eliminate all non-essential travel to limit the spread of COVID-19. In King County, *anyone* arriving from other states or countries – including returning Washington residents – should quarantine for 14 days after arrival and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. If it is not possible for the individual to quarantine for 14 days, they should quarantine and self-monitor for 10 days. If they are unable to quarantine for 10 days, they should quarantine for 7 full days after arrival.

These recommendations apply to **all** people, including those who are fully vaccinated.

10. Now that You're Vaccinated...

While the vaccine trials established that the COVID-19 vaccine prevents severe illness and death in those who are vaccinated, we are still learning more about their effectiveness in limiting transmission of the virus to others yet. [Fully vaccinated individuals](#) may follow the guideline below in personal and public settings; ***the K-12 guidance must be followed while in K-12 settings.***

- a. Can gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask in personal settings.
- b. Can gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household without masks, unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an [increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#).
- c. Do not need to quarantine or test if you've been around someone who has COVID-19, unless you develop symptoms.

11. School and District Town Hall Meetings

As the governor, in [his proclamation this week](#), is requiring more in-person learning, parents, teachers, and community members have many questions. *What will classrooms look like with social distancing in place? Will I know if there is a case of COVID-19 at my child's school? How are you planning to keep our community as safe as possible during return to learning?* The Public Health – Seattle & King County Schools and Childcare Taskforce is available to support schools and districts in hosting Virtual Town Hall events to answer some of these questions. If you're interested in coordinating an event with the Task Force, please contact SchoolResponse@kingcounty.gov with "Town Hall" in the subject line.

12. Schools and Child Care Task Force Office Hours

PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force office hours are held each Thursday from 3:30-4:30pm. Please come with your specific COVID-19 questions related to your K-12 school (e.g., environmental health, clarification of King County guidance) – *and please join us to share promising approaches that your school is using to implement COVID-19 protocols as well!* If you have questions prior to office hours, please submit them to schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov with the subject line "Office Hours." We will do our best to answer them during the following Thursday office hours session.

****Attendees are expected to review the [King County Schools COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#) and the associated [training videos](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page) **BEFORE** attending office hours.****

[Join here](#) using password **COVID19**

In health,

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force

Childcare

Dear childcare partners,

This week's Public Health — Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Schools and Childcare Task Force sector email includes the following topics:

1. Vaccine Updates
 - a. How School and Child Care staff can access vaccines
 - b. Getting Vaccinated Resources
 - c. Symptoms After Vaccination
 - d. Child Care Vaccine Eligibility Videos
2. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care
3. Upcoming Events
 - a. Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19
4. Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs
5. Environmental Health after Extended Closures

6. CDC Recommendations for Ventilation in Schools and Child Care Programs

1. Vaccine updates

a. How School and Child Care staff can access vaccines

The following are suggestions for school and childcare staff to access vaccination.

- i. The [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program](#) is *prioritizing* vaccination of school staff and child care workers during the month of March. Pharmacies participating in this program will likely have the most vaccine supply and the greatest ability to vaccinate school and child care staff quickly. Use the [COVID Vaccine Finder](#) to find and schedule an appointment through the federal Retail Pharmacy Program.
- ii. Through OSPI and Kaiser Permanente's [Get Ready](#) program partnership. You can sign up for appointments through Kaiser Permanente at [this link](#) or by reviewing the [Get Ready Program FAQ](#).
- iii. Use the online "[Phase Finder](#)" tool to confirm your eligibility and schedule an appointment at locations that have appointments available. The phase finder is available in many languages - translated Phase Finder tools are [available at this link](#). Paper versions of the tool are available on the [partner resources page](#).
- iv. You may also find vaccination appointments at pharmacies using [VaccineFinder](#). This site lists some pharmacies that are not in Phase Finder yet.
- v. Some school districts, health care providers, or counties may host clinics specifically for schools and child care workers. [OSPI's Q&A document](#) describes some opportunities that may be available specifically to educators.

b. Getting Vaccinated Resources

The FDA has authorized a third COVID-19 vaccine, made by Johnson & Johnson. This vaccine was shown to be 85% effective in preventing severe illness and only requires one dose. [Learn more here](#).

The Public Health [Getting Vaccinated](#) page now has links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. The [Vaccine FAQ](#) page answers many common questions about COVID vaccine, and includes links to translations in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), French, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Oromo, Russian, Samoan, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Tongan, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.

c. Symptoms after Vaccination

With more school and child care employees receiving vaccines, questions have come up about if individuals need to quarantine if they experience symptoms of COVID-19 soon after receiving a vaccination. Employees may return to work and *not* quarantine if they have symptoms of COVID-19 within a few days of vaccine administration, **IF:**

- They **have not** been in contact with someone with COVID-19 **AND**
- They feel well enough and are willing to perform normal activities such as work **AND**
- They do not have a fever **AND**

- Signs and symptoms are **limited only** to those observed following COVID-19 vaccination (including pain, swelling, tiredness, chills, headache – [see a list of symptoms](#)) **AND**
- They **do not** have other signs and symptoms of COVID-19, such a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or change in smell and taste.

Public Health provides information on this and other frequently asked questions on our [Vaccine FAQ page](#).

- d. Public Health has created a video PSA on vaccine eligibility for child care providers in five different languages (Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish & Vietnamese). These brief videos provide information in-language for child care providers who are now eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination. All of the videos can be [accessed here](#).

2. Special Enrollment for Washington Health Care

The pandemic continues to rage on, harming not only our physical health but also devastating jobs. Many people are finding themselves in sudden need of health insurance. There is now a [Special Enrollment Period for](#) free or low-cost insurance through Washington's Affordable Care Act health exchange – *Washington Healthplanfinder*. The enrollment period is open from Feb. 15-May 15, 2021. The enrollment period is open to anyone who is currently uninsured. Public Health – Seattle & King County has a team of [Health Insurance Navigators](#) available to help answer questions and walk through the process of applying and selecting the right insurance plan. You can also browse plans and sign up directly through [Washington Healthplanfinder](#).

3. Upcoming events

- a. **Public Health's upcoming trainings and community discussions on COVID-19 updates, risk reduction, and resources:**
- i. Con Confianza y En Comunidad: Hablando sobre COVID-19 y temas que nos afectan
 1. Martes a las 5:00 PM en español
 2. Pagina del [Condado de King](#) en Facebook
 - ii. Biweekly Community Partners' Call to hear updates and ask questions:
 1. Every other Monday at 4:00 PM in English
 2. Next call on Monday, March 29th at 4:00 PM
 3. Join via Zoom: <https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/93431287120>

4. Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs

The CDC recently updated its Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs during COVID-19. The guidance includes information on mask use, screening, keeping children in contained groups, staggering schedules, ventilation, and more. The full guidance document can be [accessed here](#).

5. Environmental Health after Extended Closures

The U.S. EPA has released two factsheets on ensuring water safety following extended closures of schools and child care facilities. These factsheets provide guidance on maintaining drinking water quality during extended closures and recommends start-up procedures when reopening to ensure that drinking water is safe for consumption. The fact sheets can be found at the following links: [Ensuring Drinking Water Quality in Schools During and After Extended Closures](#) and [Ensuring Drinking Water Quality in Child Care Facilities During and After Extended Closures](#).

6. CDC Recommendations for Ventilation in Schools and Child Care Programs

Ventilation is one component of maintaining healthy environments and is an important COVID-19 prevention strategy for schools and child care programs. Along with other prevention measures, ventilation can reduce the likelihood of spreading disease. [Visit this link](#) to learn about ways you can improve ventilation in your school or child care program. In addition, Public Health provides technical assistance to schools and child care partners who are interested in learning how to improve ventilation. Contact schoolresponse@kingcounty.gov with “Ventilation” in the subject line to get additional support from subject matter experts.

In health,

The PHSKC Schools and Childcare Task Force