



CSDNB Health and Safety Update

November 13, 2020 | Previous updates are available on csdnb.org.

This CSDNB Health and Safety Update will be used to communicate the latest updates to our staff, families, and community members for as long as needed. Previous updates are available [on our website](#) and social media platforms. To our families, please ensure that your contact information is updated in PowerSchool. If you need assistance, you can contact your child's school.

We continue to meet weekly with the New Britain Public Health Department, along with our union leadership, to determine the status of whether we remain in our hybrid model or if we will convert to a full remote learning model for all students based on the data points mentioned below. In addition, ongoing daily communication between the New Britain Public Health Department and CSDNB will be maintained throughout the pandemic.

How will decisions be made regarding the status of our learning models (hybrid vs. remote)?

Decisions on remote vs. hybrid learning for our district are based on the indicators of the spread and prevalence of COVID-19 in Hartford County, our New Britain community, and our school district. Indicators will also include the effectiveness of schoolwide mitigation strategies, such as cohorting, sanitization, airflow, and more.

CSDNB, in direct consultation with the New Britain Public Health Director and the State Departments of Health & Education, will make a decision each week based on the current data. The decision to remain in hybrid or full remote rests with both the New Britain Director of Public Health and CSDNB Administration after reviewing all data that is made available to us by the State of Connecticut. Ultimately, however, Governor Ned Lamont and the State Departments of Health & Education can mandate that school districts go into a fully remote model in the event of a statewide COVID-19 outbreak.

Reminder to all caregivers: You have the right to make the decision at any time during the pandemic to have your child(ren) fully participate in a remote learning environment. Additionally, if your child is not feeling well or displaying symptoms related to COVID-19, please keep them home.

Status Prolonged Remote Learning For Holidays/School Vacations

Please see Commissioner Cardona's message to superintendents and staff regarding the importance of making weekly decisions for our district based on school, city and state data.

This communication is to reinforce the importance of school districts making public health data-driven decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic, while safeguarding the importance of student access to in-person schooling for our children's education, social-emotional and nutritional needs. Questions have been raised about having all students learn in a fully remote environment for an extended period after Thanksgiving, or other upcoming holidays.



The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and Department of Public Health (DPH) are closely monitoring the community spread of COVID-19, as well as the school-related cases of COVID-19. The mitigation strategies we have put in place (masks, distancing, cleaning and hygiene, ventilation, cohorting, etc.) are working. We are not seeing sustained person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 in schools or outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools, despite increasing levels of COVID-19 in the community.

We also know that in-person learning is benefiting our students' social, emotional and physical well-being. The CSDE and DPH do not think that arbitrary, date-based closures of school are warranted at this time. We will continue to consult with and work with school districts, local health departments and medical advisors on individual decisions around closures, but are not recommending that districts proactively close for a prolonged period of time in anticipation of changes in disease prevalence. In-person education is too important for our children to disrupt their education further, unless and until local conditions specifically dictate the need to do so.

Please ensure you are familiar with and consult Addendum 4: Updated Guidance for Decision-Making Regarding the Use of In-Person, Hybrid (Blended), or Remote Learning Models in Connecticut Schools during COVID-19 to make these important decisions. Certainly, school districts may have to move to a remote model in the upcoming weeks and months due to the unique circumstances in the district, such as staffing. School districts should partner with their local health officials as they consider the appropriate course of action.

Learning Model Status for the week of November 16-20: Hybrid Model

We have received direction from the State of Connecticut (as noted above) to rely on data and not proactively close for a prolonged period of time in anticipation of changes in disease prevalence. The State has reinforced the importance of school districts making public health data-driven decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic, while safeguarding the importance of student access to in-person schooling for our children's education, social-emotional and nutritional needs.

While New Britain has been classified as a red zone by the State of Connecticut, the New Britain Health Department feels strongly that our current mitigation strategies in our schools are effective and are helping to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

To date, students and staff (non-remote) have combined for 71 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases. From these 71 cases, only four have been identified as being transmitted inside our schools. In all of these cases, proper mitigation strategies were not being followed. The remaining 67 cases are related to community transmission. Many of these were private gatherings, where mitigation strategies were not in place.

The New Britain Health Department recommends that our schools continue to remain open and that all students and staff continue to practice the effective mitigation strategies we have been following not only in a school setting but also in community and private settings.

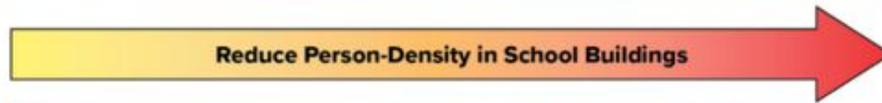


Indicators for Learning Models

The key **leading indicator** to support decision-making on the level of in-person education recommended by the Department of Public Health and Connecticut State Department of Education is the **number of new cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 population per day** (14-day average). Additionally, the guidance in Addendum 4 identifies **three secondary indicators, [which are summarized in the following dataset \(click to view\)](#):**

1. **Percent test positivity** (# of positive tests/# of total tests, 14-day average),
2. **Number of new COVID-19 hospitalizations per 100,000 population** (14-day average),
3. **COVID-like and Influenza-like Illness (CLI and ILI) Syndromic Surveillance** (14-day average).

Leading Indicator	MORE In-Person Learning	Re-assess strategies to determine appropriate balance of in-person and remote learning (hybrid learning)	LESS In-Person Learning
Number of new cases of COVID-19 (14-day average of new cases per 100,000 population per day)	< 10 new cases per 100,000 per day	10 to < 25 cases per 100,000 per day	25+ cases per 100,000 per day



Secondary Indicators	MORE In-Person Learning	Re-assess strategies to determine appropriate balance of in-person and remote learning (hybrid learning)	LESS In-Person Learning
Percent positivity rate (# of positive tests/ # of total tests, 14-day average)	Secondary Indicators trending down to flat	<u>Direction of Change:</u> Secondary Indicators trending flat to upward	Secondary Indicators trending upward
Number of new COVID-19 hospitalizations per 100,000 population (14-day average)	No statistically significant changes to Secondary Indicators	<u>Speed of Change:</u> Any statistically significant changes upward to Secondary Indicators	Consistent, statistically significant changes upward to Secondary Indicators
COVID-like and Influenza-like Illness (CLI and ILI) Syndromic Surveillance			

* Originally adapted from: the Harvard Global Health Institute's publication *The Path to Zero and Schools: Achieving Pandemic Resilient Teaching and Learning Spaces*, July 2020 and revised in consideration of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance document *Indicators for Dynamic School Decision-Making*, updated September 15, 2020

Hartford County Data

This was last updated by the State of Connecticut on November 12 for the period of October 25 - November 7. As noted below, Hartford County is in the high risk level for both the leading and secondary indicators. [Click for more information and additional resources.](#)

County	Leading		Secondary			Reporting Period	
	New COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population per day	Leading Indicator Risk Category	Percent test positivity	New COVID-19 hospitalizations per 100,000 population per day	Percent COVID-19-like illness hospital ED visits		Secondary Indicators Risk Category
Fairfield	34.0	High	6.7%	1.8	6.2%	High	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
Hartford	23.6	High	3.9%	1.9	2.6%	High	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
Litchfield	20.8	Moderate	3.4%	0.6	2.2%	Moderate	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
Middlesex	20.1	Moderate	2.0%	1.1	2.8%	Moderate	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
New Haven	28.7	High	5.2%	2.1	4.5%	High	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
New London	18.4	Moderate	3.0%	1.0	3.0%	Moderate	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
Tolland	12.4	Moderate	2.1%	0.2	2.0%	Moderate	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
Windham	18.7	Moderate	3.6%	1.1	2.4%	Moderate	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020
Connecticut	26.6	High	4.4%	1.7	3.8%	High	10/25/2020 - 11/07/2020

New Britain Data

This was last updated by the State of Connecticut on November 12 for the period of October 25 - November 7. This dataset includes a weekly count and weekly rate per 100,000 population for COVID-19 cases, a weekly count of COVID-19 PCR diagnostic tests, and a weekly percent positivity rate for tests among people living in community settings.

Dates are based on date of specimen collection (cases and positivity). These case and test counts do not include cases or tests among people residing in congregate settings, such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or correctional facilities. [Click for more information.](#)

CURRENT PERIOD (OCTOBER 25 - NOVEMBER 7)			
Total Cases Over 2 Weeks	COVID-19 Cases Per 100,000 Population Over 2 Weeks	Total Tests Over 2 Weeks	Percent Test Positivity
385	38	7,432	5.8%
PREVIOUS PERIOD (OCTOBER 18 - 31)			
Total Cases Over 2 Weeks	COVID-19 Cases Per 100,000 Population Over 2 Weeks	Total Tests Over 2 Weeks	Percent Test Positivity
276	27.2	6,370	4.8%

