

Kathy Fosser  
Interim Executive  
Director

1240 N. Highland Ave.  
Aurora, Illinois 60506



Main Number:  
630.208.3801  
Website:  
[www.kanehealth.com](http://www.kanehealth.com)  
1750 Grandstand Place  
Elgin, IL 60123

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## Updated Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools January 15, 2022

The Kane County Health Department (KCHD) adopts the updated Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools (01/12/22) to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the school setting. Updated IDPH School Guidance can be found at:

<https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/school-guidance.html>

FAQ: <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/school-guidance/school-guidance-faqs.html>

### Point of Care Testing

School Point of Care (POC) testing gives communities, schools, and families added assurance that schools can open and remain open safely for all students. By identifying infections early, testing helps keep COVID-19 transmission low and students in school for in-person learning, sports, and extracurricular activities. Additionally, POC testing can allow students to return to school and community members to return to work more quickly if their test results are negative. POC testing guidance has been updated to include information on testing based on vaccination status, prior infections, and Test to Stay in the school setting.

POC testing guidance:

<https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/school-guidance/rapid-point-care-testing-covid-19.html>

### Executive Order 2022-03

Guidance for excluding students and staff confirmed or probable cases, close contacts and symptomatic individuals:

<https://www.illinois.gov/government/executive-orders/executive-order.executive-order-number-03.2022.html>

### Important Updates

- A release letter is no longer required for students and staff to return to school.
- Schools should use the isolation and quarantine guidance defined within the IDPH School Guidance for determining the return date.
- Over-the-counter (OTC), at-home COVID-19 tests, where both specimen collection and testing are conducted at home and without proctoring, are currently not considered acceptable tests for the purpose of public health surveillance.
- Confirmed cases of COVID-19 and outbreaks should be reported to the local health department as required by the Illinois Infectious Disease Reporting requirements issued by IDPH. See:  
<https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/infectious-disease-reporting.html>

KCHD acknowledges that local school districts and administrators have the final authority to determine return to school plans. School leaders and school districts should continue to closely monitor community transmission of COVID-19, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and outbreaks to lead decisions about the level of layered prevention strategies being implemented for in-person learning.

This guidance continues to emphasize implementing layered prevention strategies (e.g., using multiple prevention strategies together consistently) to protect people who are not fully vaccinated, including students, teachers, staff, and other members of their households. Increase in vaccinations among students and staff can help support in-person learning and extra-curricular activities. Vaccination is the best defense to ending the COVID-19 pandemic. To schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment, visit [kanevax.org](http://kanevax.org).

For more guidance, visit <https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/COVID-Schools.asp>