

FAQ – School Closure

If there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 within a school, what are the recommendations for school closure?

Decisions for temporary closure of a school will be made by school leaders in consultation with the LHD during its investigation of a case or cluster of cases. If the LHD determines that there is a risk to the school community, the school may be closed temporarily for cleaning and disinfection. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. This also allows the local health officials to help the school determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

Are there alternative strategies to school closure that may be considered or employed?

Alternative strategies, less drastic than closure, might include:

- Quarantining the affected classroom where social distancing is challenging (e.g. early childhood).
- Suspending affected classes or closing playgrounds.
- Canceling non-essential activities and meetings.
- Keeping students in constant class groups or classrooms and moving teachers routinely between classes.
- Increasing spacing between students in classes.
- Shortening the school week.
- Staggering school start and lunch/break times across groups or classes.