



**COUNTY OF SULLIVAN**  
**DIVISION OF HEALTH & FAMILY SERVICES**  
*Public Health Services*  
**GLADYS OLMSTED BUILDING**  
50 COMMUNITY LANE  
LIBERTY, NY 12754

Updated August 12, 2021

Sullivan County Schools and in-school COVID-19 transmission Data: Measures of Success from School Year Fall 2020-Spring 2021.

The nine (9) public K-12 schools in rural Sullivan County opened and implemented measures to limit spread of COVID-19 in the fall of 2020 using the following mitigation measures:

- Use of masks
- Cleaning and disinfection; ventilation
- Maintaining staff and student social distancing of 6 ft. or more
- Daily screening of staff, students and teachers for signs and symptoms
- Hybrid option for remote learning 2-3 days per week
- Contact tracing and quarantining after exposures

Results from Sullivan County school data from October 1, 2020 through May 4, 2021:

- Teacher to student transmission is very low.
- Student to student transmission in the classroom setting is very low.
- Quarantining whole classrooms is unnecessary at this point, with mitigating measures in place.
- Transmission on school buses has been very low to almost non-existent.

Given this data, and following the CDC's most recent guidance for Schools is safe and will provide enough protection to further mitigate transmission of virus in the Fall of 2021, and although the Delta variant is more contagious, it is less likely to make vaccinated individuals very ill. Infection rates will be monitored very closely by SCPHS.

In Sullivan County public school districts, from Oct. 1, 2020 - May 4, 2021, according to data available to the health department from the statewide contact tracing system, there were 3,729 contacts (exposures) who were associated with a school setting in some way. Of the 3,729 total contacts (exposures) listed for nine districts identified by the state health department, only 33 (0.9%) ended up testing positive. In addition, only 3.9% of the positive cases in Sullivan County public school districts who were originally identified as exposures, ended up developing symptoms that resulted in a positive test or became epidemiologically linked based off of case definition. These cases, which were identified as "people under investigation" after developing post exposure symptoms represented 0.4% of all school case contacts (exposures).

With masking requirements and student co-horting, transmission risk within schools appeared low, suggesting that schools might be able to safely open to full in-person learning with appropriate mitigation efforts in place.

In addition, we have been tracking positivity rates of fully vaccinated cases (receiving both doses or one Janssen dose, and 14 days past last dose) and note that the rate of those who tested positive after being fully vaccinated is only 1.08% (28 / 2,579). This data covers the time period of January 2021-August 4, 2021.

We continue to hold Covid-19 Vaccine clinics at Public Health each Wednesday from 2-6 PM, with the Pfizer vaccine being offered. Anyone 12 years and older is eligible. Walk-ins or preregistration are both available. Preregistration can be done online at <https://sullivanny.us/Departments/Publichealth/COVIDvaccines/clinics> or by calling our office at (845) 292-5910.

Please note that vaccination, proper wearing of masks, social distancing, and hand hygiene are the most effective measures we have to combat this virus.

It is because of the tremendous partnerships forged this past year in response to the pandemic, between the local health department staff, school nurses, parents and school officials that we have seen a low number of cases despite the much higher rates of community transmission and positivity surrounding our schools. With these measures of success, we are confident that with continued compliance and observation of mitigation measures to prevent spread, students and staff can continue to be kept safe within the classroom setting after the resumption of in person classes Fall 2021.

As always, our office is available and knowledgeable in response to any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Nancy McGraw*

Nancy McGraw, MPH, MBA, LCSW  
Public Health Director