

# **COVID-19 and Public Health Metrics Update**

***November 13, 2020***

# Overview

- Key data
- Managing Cases in Our Schools:
  - ◆ Positive Cases
  - ◆ Contact Tracing - Close Contacts
  - ◆ Quarantine and Travelers
- Public Health: Data, Metrics, Changes
- Managing Risk- A Balanced Approach
- Summary and Key Considerations Moving Forward

# At-a-Glance: Key Data (11/13/2020)

<b>1082</b>	Total individuals tracked (positive cases, close contacts, symptomatic individuals, travellers)
<b>24</b>	Total positive cases to date
<b>1</b>	Total cases involving <i>suspected</i> transmission (staff to staff) in a school

Reason for Tracking / Quarantine	Students	Staff	Totals
<i>Tested Positive</i>	18	6	<b>24</b>
<i>Close Contact</i>	248	36	<b>284</b>
<i>Symptomatic</i>	314	38	<b>352</b>
<i>Asymptomatic- Abundance of Caution</i>	118	15	<b>133</b>
<i>Travel</i>	36	14	<b>50</b>
<i>Other (misc. reasons not listed above)</i>	8	1	<b>9</b>
<b>Total Cases Tracked Since 9/14/2020:</b>			<b>1082</b>

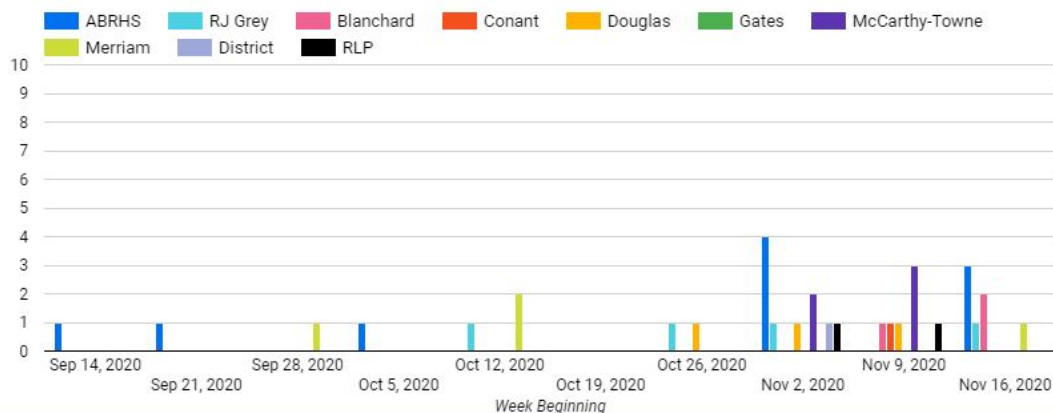
## Managing COVID Cases in Our Schools

- ❑ 24 positive cases (as of 11/13/2020)\*
  - ❑ 18 students, 6 staff members
- ❑ One suspected, but unconfirmed, case of viral spread between two cases in October

\*We have had new positive student cases 11/14-11/19

# Weekly case count by school as of:

Select date range



School	Cumulative Cas...
1. null	33
2. ABRHS	10
3. Blanchard	3
4. CHECP	0
5. Conant	1
6. District	1
7. Douglas	3
8. Gates	0
9. McCarthy-Towne	5

1 - 12 / 12 < >

### three for you & me

UNIVERSAL HEALTH & SAFETY PRACTICES  
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS DISTRICT

do your part to keep our schools safe!

1 wear a mask

MAKE SURE YOUR MASK FULLY COVERS YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH!

2 wash your hands

WASH YOUR HANDS LONG ENOUGH TO SING THE "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" SONG!

3 use distancing

HAVE AT LEAST 2 ARM LENGTHS BETWEEN YOU AND OTHERS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

**DATA COLLECTION:** ABRSD, in collaboration with the Acton and Boxborough Public Health Departments, is providing this report on the positive COVID-19 cases for students and staff in our schools by date range, plus the cumulative positive cases within the district. We report this information to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and, like the DESE report, we exclude those who are learning or teaching in a fully remote model.

**COVID-19 TESTS:** There are different types of COVID-19 tests and ABRSD informs families to get a PCR/molecular test which is typically more accurate than antigen (rapid) tests. It takes 1 to 2 days on average to get results. The state provides a list of current test sites.

**TEST RESULT NOTIFICATION:** If an individual in our school community tests positive, they are notified by their healthcare provider, testing facility, and/or the Public Health Department in the community in which they reside.

**NEXT STEPS:** If a member of our school community tests positive, they need to quarantine for at least 10 days AND until 24 hours have passed AND at least 24 hours no fever without fever-reducing medicine AND Symptoms have improved AND received clearance from Local Board of Health authority contact tracers

## Cumulative Cases (District-wide)



## Contact Tracing: A Team Approach

- ❑ Nurses, principles, vice principals, administration.
- ❑ Communication with B.O.H
- ❑ Use of a tracker.
- ❑ Test results and letters of release.
- ❑ Weekly updates with B.O.H, nurses, senior faculty, and school physician.

## Quarantine, Close Contacts, Symptomatic Individuals, and Travelers

- ❑ Quarantine calculated and verified with Health Department
- ❑ Close contacts identified
- ❑ Symptomatic individuals *sent home and asked to take a PCR test.*
- ❑ Domestic Travelers- asked to test 72 hours after returning to state. Can return with a negative test.



# **Public Health Metrics**



# Comparison of Old and New State Metrics

		Prior Metric	New Metric	
Group		(prior to 11/6)	Under 10K	10K-50K
Grey		< 5 reported cases	<= 10 total cases	<= 10 total cases
Green		< 4 cases/100K	<= 15 total cases	<10 avg cases/100K AND >10 total cases
Yellow		4-8 cases/100K	<= 25 total cases	>= 10 avg cases/100K OR >= 5% positivity rate
Red		>8 cases/100K	> 25 total cases	>= 10 avg cases/100K AND >= 5% positivity rate

# Public Health Data

as of:  
11/19  
6pm

## Acton:

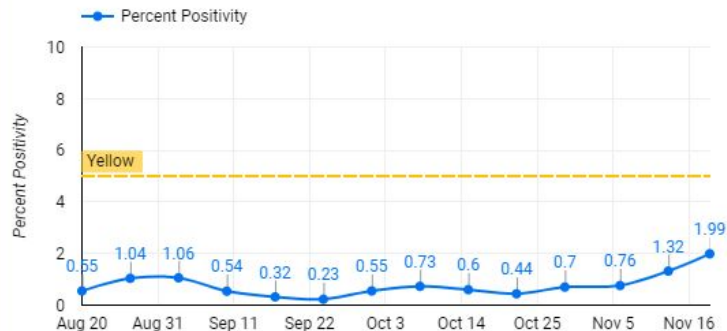
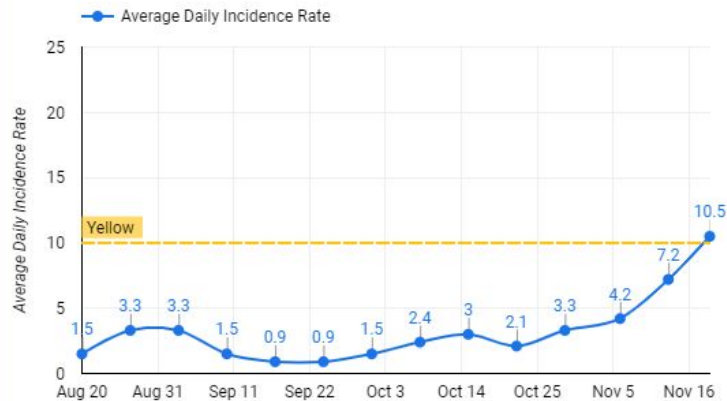
Metric	Thresholds			ACTON
	Green	Yellow	Red	
Average <i>Daily</i> Incidence Rate per 100,000 Residents (last 14 days)	<10 avg cases/100K AND >10 total cases	≥ 10 avg cases/100K OR ≥ 5% positivity rate	≥ 10 avg cases/100K AND ≥ 5% positivity rate	10.5
Percent Positivity (last 14 days)				1.99%

## Boxborough:

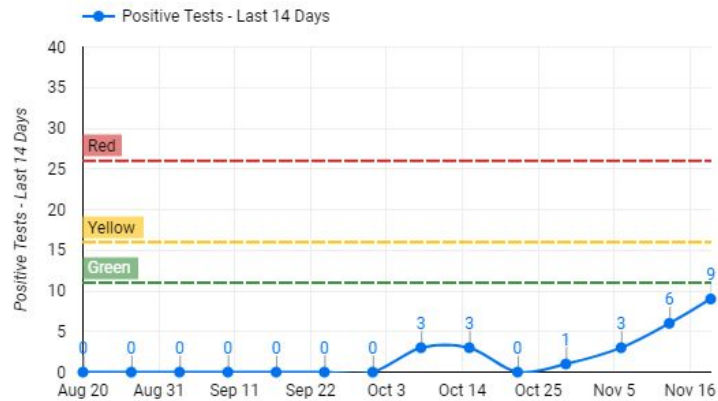
Metric	Thresholds			BOXBOROUGH
	Green	Yellow	Red	
Total Positive Cases (last 14 days)	≥ 15 total cases	≥ 25 total cases	> 25 total cases	9

# Current Public Health Data

## Town of Acton



## Town of Boxborough



### Update 11/6/20:

**Acton** data is now reported based on the column for populations between 10K and 50K

**Boxborough** data is now reported based on the column for populations under 10K

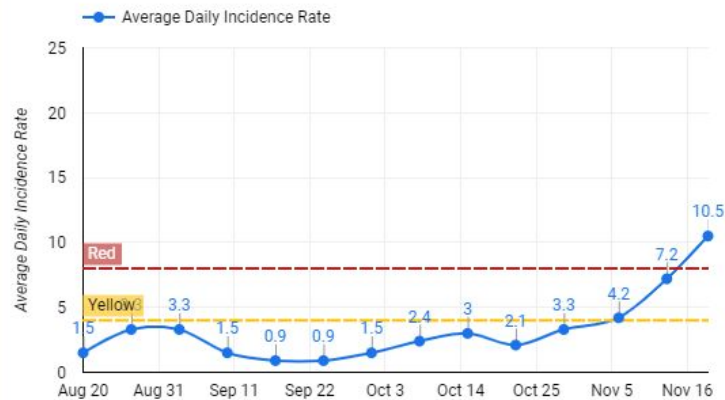
Group	Population		
	Under 10K	10K-50K	Over 50K
Grey	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 10 total cases	Less than or equal to 15 total cases
Green	Less than or equal to 15 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >10 total cases	<10 avg cases/100k AND >15 total cases
Yellow	Less than or equal to 25 total cases	≥10 avg cases/100k OR ≥5% pos rate	≥10 avg cases/100k OR ≥4% pos rate
Red	More than 25 total cases	≥10 avg cases/100k AND ≥5% pos rate	≥10 avg cases/100k AND ≥4% pos rate

For more information and a complete listing of MA communities, please visit:

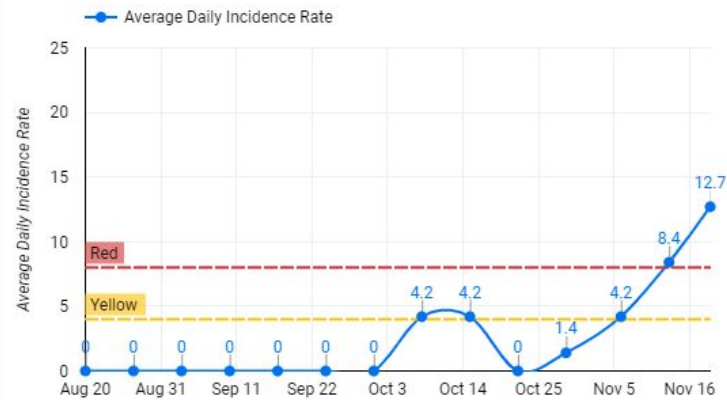
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting#COVID-19-weekly-public-health-report>

# OLD Metrics - Prior to 11/16 for Comparison Only

## Town of Acton



## Town of Boxborough



# Making Decisions about Keeping Schools Open

## DESE Guidance:

- “Districts are expected to prioritize in-person learning across all color-coded categories, unless there is suspected in-school transmission...”
- **Districts and schools in communities designated gray, green, or yellow are expected to have students learning fully in-person, if feasible...**
- **Schools in red communities should implement hybrid models, while maximizing in-person learning time for high-needs students...**
- In those communities with the highest COVID-19 caseloads and test positivity rates DESE and DPH will work with local school officials to develop and implement customized strategies to reduce in-school health risks...
- Fully remote instructional models should be implemented only as a last resort...”

## ABRSD Considerations:

1. The overall public health data no longer supports in-person learning due to a high degree of community transmission.
2. There is evidence that COVID-19 is spreading within one or more of our schools.
3. The volume of contact tracing that results from an increase in positive cases exceeds our ability to do this safely and with reasonable certainty.
4. The number of students and staff who are required to quarantine results in a substantial negative impact on our ability to offer an effective learning program.

# A Balanced Approach to Risk: Considerations for Keeping Our Schools Open

- ❑ Evidence-based strategies designed to reduce risk of transmission across the district.
- ❑ Strategy to reduce risk  $\neq$  goal of having zero COVID cases

***More and more health experts are weighing in on data: schools are not major contributors to the spread of COVID-19***

# Risk Mitigation

Key strategies for healthy buildings that include:

- *Increasing outdoor air ventilation*
- *Filtering indoor air*
- *Supplementing with portable air cleaners*
- *Verifying ventilation and filtration performance*
- *Keeping surfaces clean*
- *Focusing on bathroom hygiene*

Harvard T.H. Chan School for Public Health: [Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools](#)

# Long-Term Effects

**Dr. Ashish K. Jha** (*Dean, Brown University School of Public Health*)

- ❑ Large mental health cost to children
- ❑ Widening of achievement gap
- ❑ Long-term effects

**Dr. Mary Beth Miotto** (*VP MA Chapter, American Academy of Peds*)

- ❑ Rapid weight gain
- ❑ Sedentary lifestyle; limited physical movement
- ❑ Screen time
- ❑ Nutrition
- ❑ Youth hospitalizations and suicide attempts



# Summary: Key Questions

1. Will schools continue to show that they are not a source of transmission as we see increases in the number of initial cases in schools that come from the community?
2. Will our state and nation take steps as significant as those we see in Europe with regard to closing other sectors so that schools may remain open?
3. Will the community continue to adhere strictly to all safety protocols including mask wearing, social distancing, rules on gatherings, and hygiene as we enter the holiday season?
4. What will be the impact of a resumption of indoor sports at the youth and high school levels on the transmission of the virus and how might this impact schools?

# Summary: Considerations for Opening More Fully

*(at some point...)*

1. **Physical Distancing:** There remains inconsistent agreement among medical experts that less than 6' of physical distance among individuals is recommended.
2. **Transportation:** When we are fully in-person, our students need to sit two or three students per seat (based on age) and would need to be significantly less than the required 3' of distance between students (often immediately next to another student).
3. **Access to Testing:** The state needs to provide expanded access to surveillance testing. Testing is part of a cumulative strategic approach that should be in place state-wide.

The slide features a light blue background with a decorative pattern of squares in various shades of blue and gray. These squares are arranged in a grid-like fashion, primarily concentrated in the top right and bottom left corners, creating a modern, abstract aesthetic.

# **What questions do you have?**