

## **ACUSD Board COVID-19 Update**

Submitted by Dr. Rita Kerr, Amador County Health Officer

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### **COVID-19 Situation Report:**

Amador Resident Confirmed Cases to Date: 1,422

Active Cases as of Tuesday evening: 49 (cases are released from Isolation when they are no longer contagious)

Current Amador test positivity rate is 4.9%

Current Amador County Tier Assignment: Purple (Widespread)

The Regional Stay-at-Home Order was lifted throughout the state of California on Monday, January 25.

Contact tracing of school-related cases in Amador County to date has not confirmed any classroom transmission of COVID-19. Close contacts are advised to get tested during quarantine at 5-7 days after their exposure, or anytime if they develop symptoms. As of today, no school contacts of classroom cases have become positive. This is consistent with the conclusion of a study that was published yesterday by the CDC in the weekly MMWR report. SARS-CoV-2 is the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 illness.

### **COVID-19 Cases and Transmission in 17 K–12 Schools — Wood County, Wisconsin, August 31–November 29, 2020**

*In a setting of widespread community SARS-CoV-2 transmission, few instances of in-school transmission were identified among students and staff members, with limited spread among children within their cohorts and no documented transmission to or from staff members. Only seven of 191 cases (3.7%) were linked to in-school transmission, and all seven were among children. Mask-wearing among students was reported by teachers as high, which likely contributed to low levels of observed disease transmission in these 17 K–12 schools. Although asymptomatic transmission is possible, this study demonstrated that, with precautions in place, in-school transmission of SARS-CoV-2 appeared to be uncommon in this rural Wisconsin community, despite up to a 40% positive SARS-CoV-2 test rate in the surrounding county.*

Amador County Public Health has been coordinating with the ACUSD school nurses to ensure that students and staff who have any symptoms, and those who are in isolation or quarantine, are not on site at school campuses. It is very important in order for schools to stay open that anyone who is sick, even with a mild symptom, stay home. During our Contact Tracing calls, Public Health frequently hears stories from people who have tested positive that didn't think their mild symptoms could be COVID-19. Often, they believed they had allergies, a common cold, or food poisoning. Although the symptoms and the course of COVID-19 may be mild for that individual, they are at risk for spreading to others who may be vulnerable to more severe illness if they continue to work, attend school or interact with others. Consistently practicing proper use of face coverings, maintaining physical distance of at least 6 feet from others, and frequent hand hygiene are also crucial to minimize risk of virus spread.

Two weeks ago, the state launched the COVID-19 “Safe Schools for All” webpage at [schools.covid19.ca.gov](https://schools.covid19.ca.gov). The site has resources for school administrators, staff and families.

Amador County’s community no-cost COVID-19 nasal swab testing site has moved to the Health and Human Services Building on Conductor Boulevard off Lower Ridge Road, back entrance. It is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Children can be tested at this site. Appointments may be made by visiting [lhi.care/covidtesting](https://lhi.care/covidtesting) or calling 1-888-634-1123. Drop-in testing is available without an appointment and the staff will assist with registration on-site. Results are available within 2-3 days.

Public Health has supported ACUSD to provide COVID vaccinations to educators and school staff, with two clinics held at the Amador High School gym: last Wednesday, January 20 & today, January 27. American Legion Ambulance service has been a key partner in these vaccination efforts. Second-dose clinics will be scheduled for a month after the first doses.

We know what works. We can stop the spread of COVID in schools by layering and carefully implementing mitigation strategies, including masks, cohorting, proper ventilation, washing hands, symptom screening and testing. The vaccine adds another layer of protection on top of these measures, which even those who have received vaccine need to continue practicing at this time.

Speaking of vaccine, it’s not too late to get the flu vaccine. Although all of the things we’ve been doing to slow the spread of COVID have also helped keep influenza activity low this season, the flu can cause serious illness. Flu vaccine is available at medical clinics and pharmacies. A minimum of two weeks is needed between getting COVID vaccine and other vaccines.