

# KANSAS COVID WORKGROUP FOR KIDS



## COVID-19 Update

Wichita Public Schools  
Board of Education Meeting  
November 9, 2020

# Present Today

**Kimber Kasitz, BSN, RN, NCSN** - Director of Health, Homebound and 504 Services, USD 259.

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# Goals



- Report how COVID-19 is affecting hospitals in Wichita and Kansas
- Discuss school-based transmission and how it affects the COVID-19 community burden
- Review the importance of on-site education
- Discuss WPS's role in our city's COVID response
- Answer any further questions

# COVID-19 and Children: National Perspective

As of 11/5/2020

- Over **927,518** confirmed cases of COVID-19 in children in the United States. This represents about **11.3% of all confirmed cases**
- Most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms like a cold. COVID-19 can cause severe illness in children, but it is rare.
- Across reporting states, **1.7%** of all child COVID-19 cases result in hospitalization and **0.01%** of all child COVID-19 cases result in death
- Total of **123 Child Deaths** in America from COVID-19
- Children with certain medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness.
- Nationally, Black and Hispanic children have shown higher numbers of severe illness and death from COVID-19, this is likely due to socioeconomic risk factors.



# COVID-19 and Children: Kansas Perspective

As of 11/9/2020

## ➤ **Total Cases:**

- 0-9yo = 3,079 (3.0%)
- 10-17yo = 6,936 (6.7%)

## ➤ **Pediatric Hospitalizations = 73 (0.73%)**

## ➤ **Deaths:**

- 0-17 = 0 deaths
- 18-24 = 3 deaths

## ➤ **Clusters:**

### ➤ School – 52 clusters

- 508 cases 8 hospitalizations, 1 death

### ➤ Daycare - 17 clusters

- 78 cases, 3 hospitalizations, 0 deaths

### ➤ Sports - 38 clusters

- 338 cases, 1 hospitalizations, 1 deaths



# COVID-19 Community Data\*

	Cases	Hospitalizations	Deaths	Hosp. Rate	Case Fatality Rate
Sedgwick County	14,822		137		0.9%
Kansas	103,553	4,138**	1,181***	4.0%	1.1%
United States	~10.1 million	~500,000	~238,000	~5%	~2.4%

## \*\* Hospitalized Cases by Age Group

Age Group	# of Cases	Percent
0-9 years	42	1.0%
10-17 years	29	0.7%
18-24 years	118	2.9%
25-34 years	262	6.4%
35-44 years	354	8.7%
45-54 years	521	12.8%
55-64 years	741	18.2%
65-74 years	840	20.7%
75-84 years	729	17.9%
85+ years	429	10.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,065</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## \*\*\* Deaths by Age Group

Age Group	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
18-24 years	3	0.3%
25-34 years	10	0.9%
35-44 years	16	1.4%
45-54 years	41	3.5%
55-64 years	128	11.0%
65-74 years	224	19.2%
75-84 years	333	28.6%
85+ years	411	35.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,166</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

# How COVID-19 is impacting our hospitals

- We are experiencing alarmingly high rates of COVID-19 transmission and severe illness.
- The number of critically ill COVID-19 patients in Wichita may soon exceed the capacity of the Wichita hospitals critical care medical staff
- This may result in heartbreaking loss of life due to decreased access to local high-quality hospital care.

# Gating Criteria

- The KSDE Gating Criteria can provide insight into the community burden of COVID-19 but has limitations.
- Developed prior to having national or local data about COVID-19 transmission in schools and efficacy of COVID-mitigation strategies for school-aged children.
- Developed with the expectation that the larger community would implement safety measures in response to high levels of COVID-19.
- Local school transmission rates should be important when approaching further learning model decisions.

# School-based COVID-19 Transmission

- So far, school-based transmission of COVID-19 appears to be relatively low compared to other community transmission rates.
- As the community burden of COVID-19 increases, the risk of school-based COVID-19 transmission increases.
- WPS has implemented a strong safety plan for on-site learning that includes multiple layers of protection
- Many surrounding districts have utilized on-site hybrid/blended learning plans for middle schools and high schools.

# How does on-site education impact the community COVID-19 rate?

- Children in schools do not drive COVID-19 spread; adult behaviors in the community do.
- Closing schools to in-person attendance without other community mitigation measures will have minimal impact on the transmission of COVID-19 in the community.
- Rather than closing schools when community transmission is high, places that have been shown to increase transmission should be the focus of community-wide COVID-19 mitigation efforts and restrictions.
- Universal masking and limits on large gatherings will be more effective at decreasing our community COVID-19 burden than school closure.

# Risks of on-site education

- The success of on-site education is closely related to the COVID-19 community burden and adherence to COVID-19 mitigation strategies.
- When there is high community COVID-19 numbers, there will be more students and staff at school while asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. Depending on the adherence to COVID-mitigation protocols, they may transmit the virus, causing illness and possibly resulting in COVID-19 clusters.
- High school students are at a similar risk to transmit COVID-19 as adults.
- Younger children are at lower risk of transmitting COVID 19.

# Risks of long-term remote learning

- Decreased academic achievement
- Accelerated education inequality
- Decreased long-term earning potential for students
- Family economic impact
- Negative impact on working women
- Decreased utilization of school-based mental health and support services
- Risk of worse mental health outcomes for students
- Increased risk of child maltreatment
- Increased adolescent high-risk behaviors
- Reliance on low quality childcare

# Risks of long-term remote learning

- Closing USD 259 schools to on-site learning accelerates education inequality in our community.
- Students at higher socioeconomic risk and students who have weaker academic skills are at greater risk for poor outcomes from remote education.
- The negative effects of long-term remote education disproportionately affect students in lower grades.
- For many families with preK-6th grade children, the alternative to on-site education may be poor-quality childcare in homes or other non-school group settings with less COVID mitigation measures and less support for remote learning.

# Athletics and Extracurriculars

- Contact sports played indoors will be at very high risk for COVID-19 transmission, especially as our community numbers increase.
- Spectators at indoor sports will be at very high risk for COVID-19 transmission
- The Wichita Metro area has already seen COVID-19 clusters related to school-based athletics that have led to entire high schools being closed.
- Leaders must weigh the value of extracurriculars compared to the risk of further COVID-19 transmission and school closures.
- If students are restricted from school-based extracurriculars, would they instead participate in other community athletics? How would this impact community COVID-19 transmission?

# Additional data to track

## ➤ **Academic Outcomes:**

- Consider new educational achievement measures to critically evaluate how remote education is working for the district.

## ➤ **COVID-19 and Safety:**

- Site-specific data
- Classrooms closed due to COVID-19
- Schools/buildings closed due to COVID-19
- Students on quarantine from school-based exposures that contract COVID-19
- Staff on quarantine from school-based exposures that contract COVID-19

## ➤ **Staffing**

# What is a school district's role?

- USD 259 exists to educate our children and should not be forced to deprive some of the most vulnerable students in our community of their right to an appropriate education.
- Any decision by USD 259 alone will not be able to reverse the high rates of COVID-19 in our community.
- USD 259 district leaders, staff and parents should advocate for more community responsibility to control COVID-19.
  - Official policy on community mitigation measures
  - Culture of adult responsibility

# What is a school district's role?

- A strong and inclusive public-school system is essential to the short- and long-term recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in Wichita.
- District leaders must consider ways to improve the long-term academic outlook for all students, provide as much safe on-site education as possible and buffer the harms of long-term remote education

# What is a school district's role?

- Focus resources, space, staff and effort on allowing students in PK-6<sup>th</sup> grade to continue on-site learning models even in periods of high community transmission.
- Be ready to close schools/buildings or move even elementary students to hybrid or full MySchool Remote if:
  - Hotspots/clusters
  - Increased school-based transmission
  - Staffing limitations

# What is a school district's role?

- All students in USD 259, who are below or near minimum learning proficiency and/or are otherwise at-risk deserve special attention.
- Even in times of high community transmission, schools should develop safe ways to bring individual students or small groups on-site for educational support to counteract the negative effects of long-term remote education

We are  
available  
for any  
questions.

**Thank You** for serving our children and  
community with wisdom and  
thoughtfulness.

