

# Decision-making for School District Operations During the 2020-2021 School Year

Rev. July 23, 2020

## Background

In our [Strong and Healthy Start guidance](#) and our [guidance on Hybrid Learning](#), we established the basic state-level direction for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year and for ensuring the conditions and options for their continuous operation. The purpose of this guidance is to describe the decision-making considerations for implementing this guidance to provide clarity around the various roles in the decision-making process.

## Instructional Dispositions

School districts will have three instructional dispositions available to them:

1. Remote Learning – School is closed for in-person instruction;
2. Hybrid Learning – School is open for in-person instruction but some students might receive instruction through remote learning; and
3. In-Person Learning – School is open and all students receive instruction at school.

School boards will have the authority to decide which of these instructional dispositions will be implemented in their schools. School boards should describe the parameters for instructional dispositions through policy or delegate authority to the superintendent to do so through administrative procedure. See the [guidance on Hybrid Learning](#) for considerations for these policies and procedures.

The Secretary of Education will require superintendents to submit a monthly report on the percentages of students in each instructional disposition and their grade levels.

## Statewide Public Health Conditions

Our Safe and Healthy Start guidance refers to three levels or steps for health precautions necessary to implement in-person instruction. These step levels will be determined by the Department of Health based on an assessment of state-level health conditions. All Vermont schools will be placed at the same step level.

- Step 1 – Community spread; school is closed for in-person instruction through health order or executive order;
- Step 2 – Virus is suppressed but a high degree of school-level protections are implemented; and
- Step 3 – Virus is suppressed but a limited degree of school-level protections are implemented.

The Department of Health will determine step levels based on the data being used by the Governor's COVID-19 Leadership Team to inform Vermont's COVID-19 response. See the [Department of Financial Regulation's COVID-19 Resource Center](#) for more information.

### **Closing Schools for In-Person Instruction**

Other than under Step 1, the decision to close schools or certain classrooms for in-person instruction will be made by the local superintendent after consulting with the Department of Health.