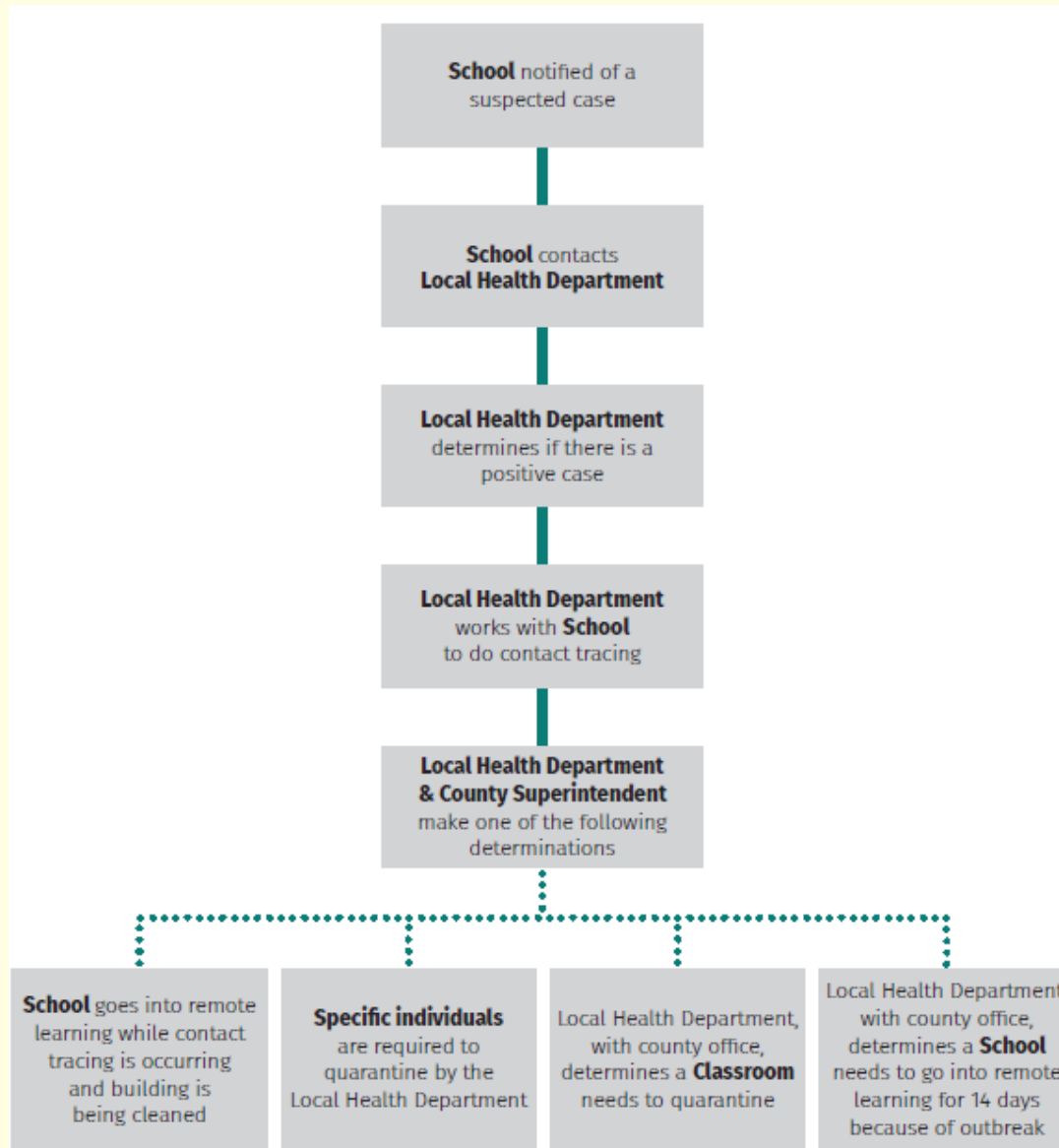


# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in School Settings

December 2, 2020



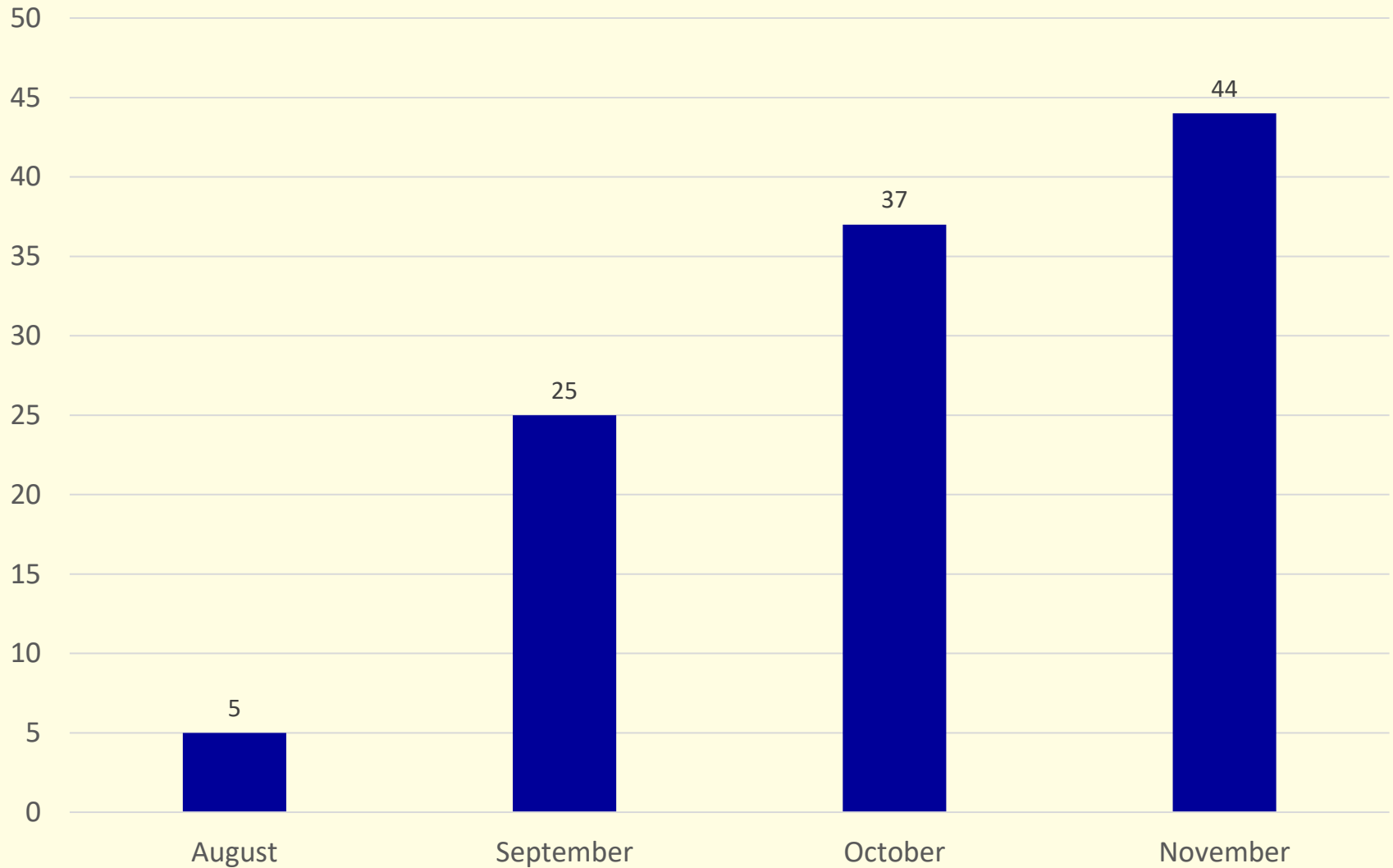
# Responding to COVID-19 Cases



# Outbreak Trends in School Settings

- **111 outbreaks in K-12 schools have been reported since August**
- **Total of 478 confirmed cases reported from 41 counties**
  - Range 2-24 cases per outbreak
  - Median 4 cases
  - 223 (47%) students and 255 (53%) staff

# Confirmed Outbreaks in School Settings by Month, N=111



# Types of Schools, N=111

Type of School	Number of Outbreaks
Elementary	32
Middle	22
High	35
K-12	7
K-8	4
K-7	1
Pre-K	1
Middle/High	1
Technical/Vocational	4
Bus Garage	4

# Who Was Impacted, N=111

- **39 (35%) outbreaks involved in staff only**
  - Result of in-person meetings, congregating in break rooms, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, close contact among teachers especially those who co-teach
- **28 (25%) outbreaks involved students only**
  - 10 being associated with sports teams
  - 11 outbreaks index case was identified a close contact to a confirmed case or associated with a community outbreak
  - 7 outbreaks among students' transmission occurred by bus, classroom, or associated extracurricular activities
- **44 (40%) outbreaks involved students and staff**

# Trends, N=111

- **23 (21%) outbreaks occurred among sports teams**
  - football (8), volleyball (8), other (7)
- **33 (30%) outbreaks were a result of students or staff becoming infected through close contact with a case or being associated with an outbreak in the community**
- **55 (49%) outbreaks transmission in school setting**
  - 27 outbreaks occurred among teachers only or as a result of staff not following social distancing best practices (in person meetings eating together, or social gatherings)
  - 13 outbreaks occurred in special educational classrooms or other classroom settings where activities increased likelihood for transmission (dual teachers, music, health)
  - 5 outbreaks resulted in only a single student and teacher developing illness
  - 10 outbreaks transmission was not documented

# Best Practices

- Cloth face coverings are one of the best preventative measures to reduce transmission
- Reinforce social distancing in settings both inside and outside the classroom
- Limit opportunities for exposure among staff by reducing face-to-face contact
  - Break rooms, in-person meetings, congregating for lunch, social gatherings, visiting other classrooms
- Be self aware that actions taken outside of the classroom have a direct impact on the health and safety of students inside the classroom
- Cohorting students limits transmission – have assigned seating
- Promote social distancing and eliminate large gatherings



# CDC Says Schools Should Remain Open

- Schools are safe and should remain open, despite increased transmission in the community
- Schools do not pose a threat of spreading the virus and are among the safest places where children can be
- No data has been shown nationwide that the virus is being spread in the school setting as long as masking and social distancing guidelines are followed
- Extensive data collected from across the county over the past 3 months confirm that schools can operate face-to-face learning and they can do it safely
- Research indicates districts that close schools attempting to curb community transmission have higher rates of transmission than those districts that have remained open—masking and social distancing works

Source: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/press-briefing-vice-president-pence-members-coronavirus-task-force-november-19-2020/>

- Data from 191 countries shows no consistent link between reopening schools and increased rates of COVID-19
- There is strong evidence that, with basic safety measures in place, the net benefits of keeping schools open outweigh the costs of closing them
- Schools are not a main driver of community transmission, and children are more likely to get the virus outside of school settings
- Child-to-child transmission of the coronavirus in schools was “uncommon and not the primary cause” of infections among children who caught the virus while attending school

# Conclusion

- To date, limited transmission in schools in West Virginia has been observed
- Greatest risk for transmission appears to be among older children, aged 12-17 years
- Much of the data indicates that virus is being acquired outside of the educational setting or in situations where guidance is not being followed
- Schools and local health departments have worked diligently to implement protective measures to reduce transmission in the school setting
- As we see increased community transmission, it is crucial that schools continue to layer prevention strategies to reduce COVID-19 disease risk for students, teachers, school staff, and families