Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in School Settings

November 11, 2020
Responding to COVID-19 Cases

- School notified of a suspected case
  - School contacts Local Health Department
    - Local Health Department determines if there is a positive case
      - Local Health Department works with School to do contact tracing
        - Local Health Department & County Superintendent make one of the following determinations
          - School goes into remote learning while contact tracing is occurring and building is being cleaned
          - Specific individuals are required to quarantine by the Local Health Department
          - Local Health Department, with county office, determines a Classroom needs to quarantine
          - Local Health Department, with county office, determines a School needs to go into remote learning for 14 days because of outbreak
Outbreak Trends in School Settings

- 84 outbreaks in K-12 schools have been reported since August
- Total of 357 confirmed cases reported from 40 counties
  - Range 2-24 cases per outbreak
  - Median 4 cases
  - 158 (44%) students and 199 (56%) staff
Confirmed Outbreaks in School Settings by Month, N=84

- August: 5
- September: 25
- October: 37
- November: 17
School Setting Outbreak Trends

- **31 (37%) outbreaks occurred in staff only**
  - Result of in-person meetings, congregating in break rooms, close contact among teachers especially those who co-teach
- **17 (20%) outbreaks occurred among sports teams**
  - Football (8), Volleyball (5), Other (4)
- **19 (23%) 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**
Transmission in Educational Setting

- 14 (17%) outbreaks have occurred in the educational setting
  - 4 outbreaks in special education settings where close contact is more common
  - 5 outbreaks resulted in only a single student and teacher developing illness
  - 2 outbreaks occurred in music or health settings where the classroom activities likely increased risk for transmission
  - 3 outbreaks occurred in educational settings where there were multiple teachers in the classroom who were positive increasing the likelihood of exposure
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
Conclusion

• To date, we have seen limited transmission in schools in West Virginia
• Greatest risk for transmission appears to be among older children, aged 12-17 years
• 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