

Education Minnesota

Everyday choices will determine how Minnesota schools get through the fall surge of COVID-19

For more information, contact:

[Chris Williams](#)

651-292-4816 (work)

651-247-5539 (cell)

ST. PAUL, Minnesota, Nov. 12, 2020 – More school buildings will close if Minnesotans don't do more to stop the spread of the new coronavirus in their communities, said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota, after the release of alarming new infection data on Thursday.

"The new data on infections in schools are disappointing because educators want to be safely teaching their students in classrooms, but that can't happen until our communities get the virus under control," Specht said. "Minnesota's students need the adults in their lives to come together on this."

She said the prevention measures inside schools won't be enough to keep school buildings open if Minnesotans don't do their part out in their communities. Some buildings are already closing because so many educators are sick or in quarantine. County-level infection rates are rising all over the state.

"The decisions that will keep school buildings open aren't just being made by superintendents or school boards, they are made by regular Minnesotans every day," Specht said. "Wear a mask. Keep your distance. Stay home when you can. Get tested if you need it. Those are the choices that matter now. If you won't do it for yourself, do it for your local students. We can still tame the virus if everyone does their part."

The Minnesota Department of Health reported that since Nov. 5, there were more than 1,000 new cases of COVID-19 associated with K-12 students and staff, a 159-building increase of affected buildings and a near doubling of schools with five or more cases to 63. Also Thursday, the department reported 7,228 new COVID-19 cases in Minnesota and 39 new deaths.

About Education Minnesota

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota's members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota's public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota's community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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