

**From:** [Health](#)  
**To:** [PH BOH Support](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Dane County guidelines  
**Date:** Thursday, February 18, 2021 10:11:13 AM

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-----Original Message-----

From: Sam Charles <samcharles13@gmail.com>  
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 9:17 AM  
To: Health <Health@publichealthmdc.com>  
Subject: Dane County guidelines

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good evening. I am writing an email to the Executive Leadership Team and Board of Health, in hopes of opening a line of discussion regarding the latest guidelines regarding sports and swimming in particular.

I am both a physician and a father to swimmers. I am very grateful for the gradual change in guidelines for our schools and youth sports, as kids in our community are hurting internally on many levels. Those gradual changes allowing our kids to begin returning to school and participating in clubs, activities and sports will go a long way in what has been a horrific year for all of us.

In particular, I would like to discuss with any or many of you regarding the guidelines for social distancing during a swim relay and how that would prohibit having 50 swimmers at an event, and instead require the event to be capped at 25 athletes. I do believe that current data and transmission rates in and around swimming pools throughout our state and our country would support this. I am certain that if you were familiar with a swim meet and the logistics of such an event, that you would agree with my point of view. I am hoping that our discussion will convince you to alter the current order or to change the rule with the next order, to allow this to happen.

I understand that this has been a difficult time for everyone, and I know that your job during this pandemic has been quite stressful. There will never be a day where everyone is happy with county orders. I would be so appreciative to discuss this issue in a collegial manner.

I can be reached by email or cell phone, and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Sam Charles  
608-239-8045

**From:** [Health](#)  
**To:** [PH BOH Support](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Return Kids to School!  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:12:27 PM

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**From:** Kristi Estabrook <kristiestabrook@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:31 AM

**To:** Health <Health@publichealthmdc.com>

**Cc:** salernosteve@mhasd.k12.wi.us

**Subject:** Return Kids to School!

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Dane County Public Health,

I know you control whether or not our children return to full in person learning for all districts that fall within the county. Please see the below letter of support to our Mount Horeb Superintendent for sending our children back to school full time. **Please share this with your board members and leaders.**

I have the unique experience as an emergency department psychiatrist watching how this pandemic has affected our children and how quickly things are improving for children with a return to in person learning in the community that I work remotely for (Minnesota, where they just statewide required schools to return to in person learning).

**Please quickly give the control back to individual districts at a minimum to decide their best path by allowing 3 feet of physical distance to be the allowable standard for social distancing in schools in Dane county.**

As a new resident to Dane County, I hope you act quickly and decisively. We cannot afford to "pump the brakes" any longer. There is clearly enough data to support schools going back now for those families who feel safe doing so- months of data across the state, country and world. The risk physically, to young children especially, pales in comparison to the risk to their mental health, let alone their education. Dr. Halverson on the board surely knows that well.

Minnesota has also successfully prioritized vaccines for their teachers and are rolling that out quickly. I would like to advocate that Dane county do that as well.

Sincerely,  
Kristi Estabrook, MD

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kristi Estabrook** <[kristiestabrook@gmail.com](mailto:kristiestabrook@gmail.com)>

Date: Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 5:59 AM

Subject: Return kids to school

To: <[salernosteve@mhasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:salernosteve@mhasd.k12.wi.us)>

Hi,

I am writing to please ask that you return at a minimum elementary aged children to school full time as quickly as possible. I saw the minutes from last night's board meeting (thank you for the transparency on sending them out) and I know you want feedback.

I am new to the community. I just moved from Duluth, Minnesota three weeks ago with my four young children, two in elementary school. I also am a physician, a psychiatrist specializing in mental health emergencies in the emergency department and I am now working remotely. I lead a team of clinicians who do the initial evaluations for all children presenting in mental health crisis in Duluth to the major hospital there.

What I will tell you is this- children are severely suffering emotionally with remote and hybrid learning and the data and risk does not support continuing to keep them home given what we know now about low rates of infectious transmission in young children. You probably have reviewed that data from Europe and other areas. This was the major reason behind Minnesota as a state mandating that schools return to full in person learning (with an option for remote).

What I can tell you from my work anecdotally is this: The volume of children presenting to the emergency department in mental health crisis appears to be related to the level of in person school. Our volumes for children presenting with suicide and depression has been higher than normal throughout the pandemic, but with Duluth returning to in person schooling for elementary kids in the end of January, we are already seeing those numbers of young children presenting in mental health crisis drop in the last two weeks. Nearly all of the children we see with suicide attempts and depression cite the isolation of the pandemic as a major cause, and we are seeing very high numbers of kids in acute mental health crisis who have never had a history of those issues in the past.

This doesn't even take into account the parents we are seeing- depressed, overwhelmed, burnt out, worried about their kids education and loss of in classroom experience that is increasing each week. Parents of children who are not in person learning are also experiencing unprecedented levels of mental health issues. I see that both anecdotally and there is data to clearly support that nationally.

I know you are in a tough position politically with this, but as a mother and a physician, I strongly support a return to full in person learning to reduce the mental health crisis we are seeing grow exponentially in both children and parents.

Thank you for your time reading this.

Sincerely,  
Kristi Estabrook

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Kristi Estabrook

414.793.7600

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