




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



To: Superintendents of Schools

From: John D. Frassinelli, Director 
Division of School Health, Child Nutrition, and Family Services

Date: May 2, 2024

Subject: School Year 2024-25 Infectious Disease and Indoor Air Quality School Site Visits

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has engaged the Yale School of Public Health (YSPH) to provide consultation to local education authorities (LEAs) on school policies and practices related to school environmental health and infectious disease prevention and mitigation that support optimal school learning environments. The YSPH has specific expertise in the development and implementation of policies and practices in the areas of indoor air quality, building ventilation and filtration, infection risk, and control of transmission in indoor settings.

While webinars and guidance documents will be part of the YSPH work, this memo and the accompanying survey are to solicit your interest in school site visits in the upcoming school year. These can be helpful for you to judge infection prevention and air quality safety measures in your schools. Target infections include SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and influenza (flu), but reducing risk from all respiratory viruses is the goal.

Typically, Dr. Sten Vermund will conduct the site visit with another environmental expert to tour a representative school in your district. Building managers, principals, or others from other schools in the district could be invited. Just as during the peak of COVID-19, the YSPH team would work with you after touring the facility to think through what exactly could be done to enhance school safety. In addition, they may observe that you are doing more than necessary, and you might be able to scale back certain activities.

These efforts can review specialty areas as well, such as music, art, sports, drama, assembly halls, and transportation. Vaccine hesitancy, school nursing practices, and community forums all can be discussed. Mental health issues can be discussed with the addition of a telemedicine consultation with Dr. Vermund's colleagues who have been working with him to mitigate depression and anxiety issues among students, parents, and staff.

To engage these services, which will be provided **at no cost to the district**, please complete the brief survey at: https://yalesurvey.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bCKqvvPdWbmwoWG

To learn more about the YSPH team, please visit the links below.
<https://ysph.yale.edu/profile/sten-vermund/> ; <https://ysph.yale.edu/profile/krystal-pollitt/>
<https://ysph.yale.edu/public-health-research-and-practice/interdepartmental-foci/infectious-diseases/covid/reopening-information/guidance-for-reopening-schools/>

JDF:er