



Back to School Playbook:

*A Guide for Families and
School Staff*

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INTRODUCTION

Little did we all know when news of COVID-19 broke in China, that a few months later our district, county, state, and nation would also feel the massive effects of a worldwide pandemic. We all watched, throughout January and February, as cases began to appear in the United States, primarily here in California.

Increases in cases ultimately led to California Governor Gavin Newsom issuing Executive Order N-26-20 on March 13, 2020, which provided ongoing funding for schools, regardless of facility closures, so long as employees continued to receive pay, school meals were provided, and “high quality educational opportunities were provided.” The order was immediately followed by closures of many schools in California, including Del Norte County Schools, which were closed on March 16 as a result of a special Board meeting on March 15. Staff immediately began to deliver meals, prepare instructional materials, and reach out to students and families. No staff were released or received a reduction in pay during this time.

As we moved into summer, we received a number of guidance documents, health information, updates to services, letters regarding school requirements, and other, at times conflicting, information. Congress finally passed the State budget at the end of June, and it included in SB 98, the first broad descriptions of Distance Learning, including language about required minutes, services, curriculum, and student supports. Many points of this law and “final” guidance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) were not clarified until late July and into August.

Students, parents, certificated, classified, and administrative staff and other community groups have provided input and recommendations into guidance and protocols that are incorporated into this document, and I would like to thank them all.

The information, protocols, and processes found in this plan are based on information from the California Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control, the Regional Association of Northern California Health Officers, and direct consultation with the Del Norte County Public Health Officer.

Please know that this document will be updated as guidance changes.

We look forward to working with our students, parents, families, staff, and community as we engage on a new adventure together.

ASSUMPTIONS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Assumptions

As we have begun the 2020-2021 school year, three overriding assumptions exist:

1. COVID-19 will continue to be a reality with which we will have to contend physically, mentally, and intentionally throughout the year;
2. Based on the county risk level, as defined in the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#), it is possible that, after students have returned to campus, we may be required to move back into a more restrictive educational setting; and
3. We will need to maintain precautions to support the safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, and the community.

Commitments

The Guiding Principles were developed to encapsulate the primary goals of this general document and the more complete **District Epidemic/Pandemic Safety Plan**.

We considered the wide array of needs for students, staff, and families that would need to be addressed, and the principles provide the framework in which to do that.

The Guiding Principles are:

- **ADOPT A WHOLE SCHOOL WELLNESS APPROACH:** Ensure student and adult health and success in school, work and community.
- **QUALITY INSTRUCTION:** Maintain quality instruction, whether synchronous or asynchronous, as the cornerstone of the success of the educational program.
- **COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND ACCESS:** Provide each student opportunities to achieve academic success that are accessible, personalized, culturally relevant, and responsive.
- **PARTNER WITH STUDENTS, FAMILIES, COMMUNITY, STAFF AND LABOR GROUPS:** Engage with students, families, community partners, certificated, classified, and administrative staff, and labor groups to build collective impact and support the health of our students and our school community.
- **CLEAR AND OPEN COMMUNICATION:** Continue to utilize current communication methods, to build on these methods, and to seek out new communication opportunities.
- **LEARN AND IMPROVE:** Utilize a continuous improvement process to continually and consistently evaluate our response plan and use evidence to guide decision making.

UNDERSTANDING GUIDANCE

As a public school system within the State of California, our guidance comes primarily from the California Department of Public Health and is “implemented only with local health officer approval following their review of local epidemiological data.” (CDPH)

“The Governor has ordered, in multiple executive orders, that all California residents heed the guidance and directives of the state public health officer. Government Code section 8665 provides that any person who violates or who refuses or willfully neglects to obey an Executive Order shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction shall be punishable by a fine.”



All guidance referenced in this plan is provided from several sources. Those providing guidance with the force of law are in bold:

- [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#): **CDPH has a broad range of documents available for guidance and information. Per Executive Order, CDPH is the legal authority to issue guidance throughout the State.**
- [Del Norte County Health and Human Services – Public Health Officer \(PHO\)](#): **The Public Health Officer enforces and interprets CDPH guidance on a local level.**
- [Regional Association of Northern California Health Officers](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#): The CDC is one of the major operating components of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. CDC provides national level recommendations, alerts, and information on issues like COVID-19.
- [World Health Organization](#): WHO is the directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations system and adheres to the UN values of integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity.

Additional supporting documentation and information for this plan comes from the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, and other local and state resources providers for schools.

“Governmental and non-governmental entities at all levels have issued guidance relating to the safe reopening of schools for in-person instruction. Under the operative executive orders and 2020-21 Budget Act, schools must comply with orders and guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health and relevant local public health departments. Schools may comply with guidance from other federal, state, local, and non-governmental sources, to the extent those guidelines are consistent with state and local public health directives.” (CDPH)

SCHOOL SAFETY MEASURES

District and Site Safety Plans

Given new circumstances created by COVID-19, our District must work directly with our County Public Health Officer, understand criteria for opening and closing schools, and be mindful of special circumstances that may prevent some students from returning to campus and may lead others to require additional support when on campus. Additionally, we must create Site-Specific Protection Plans (SSPP) for each school to ensure that resuming in-person instruction is safe for both students and staff.

Returning to and staying in in-person instruction safely depends on a series of factors, some of which we are not able to control, such as the state of public health in each individual California county. As public health conditions continue to evolve and new scientific evidence becomes available, we will have to continue to adapt our plans. Working collaboratively with our local health official and understanding public health guidance will help us respond to the changing circumstances to ensure the safety of students and staff.

We can return students to campus in [one of three different ways](#):

- If our [county is eligible](#) to reopen,
- If we have been granted a [waiver](#) to reopen grades TK-6 (when our county is not yet cleared to re-open), or
- If we choose to offer in-person limited [small-group targeted support and services](#) to small groups of students in ways that maintain the focus on health and safety and minimize transmission, while our county is not cleared to re-open.

The District Pandemic/Epidemic Safety Plan may be found [here](#) or on our website at www.dnused.org/learningoptions. School site safety plans are posted on each school's website or can be requested by contacting the school principal or the District.

The Challenge

The challenge of planning for the re-entry of students and staff to campuses started with thinking through the ways in which state and local guidelines would impact the daily experience of staff and students. This includes considerations such as using buses, arriving at school, getting to class, having meals, ensuring safe campus environments, returning home from school, etc. Every practice, protocol, and process needed to incorporate universal precautions and other safety measures, as recommended by CDPH, CDC, and local public health. As a district, the following principles governed our safety planning:

- Prioritize student and staff health, safety and well-being as a top priority.

- Ensure hygiene and health-related practices are consistent with CDPH and CDC guidelines and are clearly communicated, effectively implemented and diligently enforced.
- Promote practices and protocols to reduce risk of virus transmission and support our capacity to be responsive and agile when facing what could prove to be quickly changing health issues within our schools and county.

The contents of this document provide the following:

- A clear focus on variables we can control;
- Verified sources and guidance regarding the virus and how to best minimize our community’s exposure to it;
- An explanation of plans to reduce risk of virus (COVID-19) transmission and exposure, not eliminate it;
- Identification of external and internal conditions that would lead us to tighten or loosen restrictions; and
- An overview of new practices, policies and regulations that are flexible yet can be implemented and maintained.

This guide will continue to be updated as guidance, other law, or information changes.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting

The first step in understanding safety is to understand the vocabulary of safety. When we talk about “safe classrooms,” everyone immediately thinks of cleaning. In our District, we use the words cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting as defined by the Centers for Disease Control:

Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Sanitizing lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. This process works by either cleaning or disinfecting surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

In our District, we have two layers of cleaning and disinfecting:

CUSTODIAL DISINFECTION

Each evening, the custodian on duty enters each classroom, wipes down hard, exposed surfaces and frequently touched surfaces. After that **cleaning**, the custodian sprays all cleaned surfaces with Vindicator+.

This product is a phosphate-free, pH neutral formulation designed to provide effective cleaning, deodorizing, and disinfection for hospitals, nursing homes, households, homes, private residences, schools, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, lodging establishments, retail business, athletic/ recreation facilities, sports stadiums, amphitheaters and convention centers where housekeeping is of prime importance in controlling cross-contamination. Vindicator +, when used as directed, is formulated to disinfect hard, non-porous, inanimate, [and] environmental surfaces. . .

After Vindicator+ is sprayed on these surfaces, it is allowed to dry. This product is on the EPA N list and is effective in eliminating the COVID-19 virus. All custodial staff are supplied with and expected to use the appropriate protective equipment provided for them and for which they were trained to use in the application of this product. The Safety Data Sheet (SDS) may be viewed [here](#), in each site office or in the Maintenance and Operations Office located at 301 W Washington Blvd.

During the school day, the custodian will maintain normal cleaning and disinfecting routines but will enhance cleaning to include more frequent cleaning of restrooms, door handles, office counters, and other high touch surfaces outside of the classrooms.

CLASSROOM AND NON-CLASSROOM DISINFECTION DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Each classroom, school office, and other used spaces will be provided with one of three products to clean and disinfect throughout the day. The products are:

- Wipes in an alcohol based solution; or
- Alcohol based spray to be used by spraying and wiping with provided paper towels; or
- Wipes in a non-bleach based solution.

Staff will also be provided with food service-type gloves to use as an added layer of protection, should they choose. Gloves are not required in the application of the alcohol based products

because they contain the same chemical as basic hand sanitizer. Students in K-2 will not use any disinfecting product, and students in 3-12 will only use alcohol based products after they have been provided with specific information and instruction.

It is our intent that all spaces used by students will only use alcohol based disinfecting products. Other wipes that are non-bleach based will only be used in the event that no other alcohol based disinfecting products are available.

Staff will use these products to frequently clean frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, pencil sharpeners, etc.

HEALTH SCREENING

Ensuring that students and staff are protected includes requiring those who are symptomatic to stay home and recover before coming back into the school environment. The best way to accomplish this is by having each student and staff member screened prior to coming onto campus. All staff and students will be required to complete a self-assessment screener each day that they are reporting to a school campus.

There are two ways to accomplish this:

1. Active Screening

Active screening is the type of screening you would see at a doctor's office or hospital in times of infectious transmission. Most active screening consists of questions to determine if the person has been exposed to an infectious situation or is exhibiting symptoms of that infection. These screenings are performed in person and upon arrival.

2. Passive Screening

Passive screening has most likely been experienced when the person self-assesses their symptoms, past exposure, or other factors and records those on an information sheet or app to give to a healthcare provider.

According to CDC, active screening is **not** recommended.

- *CDC does not currently recommend universal symptom screenings (screening all students grades K-12) be conducted by schools.*
- *Parents or caregivers should be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of infectious illness every day.*
- *Students who are sick should not attend school in-person.*

When to Complete the Screener

Del Norte schools will rely primarily on a passive screener that will be completed by the family of the child or by the staff member prior to entering campus. The screener is currently

available by paper or through electronic form for staff and will be available by paper or electronic form for all students as they are brought back onto campus.

Screening includes identifying if the person being screened is exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4 or greater
- Cough that is new or uncontrolled that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/ asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Been in close contact with a person with COVID-19
- Chills
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Vomiting or abdominal pain
- Diarrhea

The COVID-19 Daily Self-Assessment for Staff can be found [here](#) and Appendix A.

Additional information for parents regarding screening students may be found at [CDC.gov](#)

If a Screener Is Not Completed

In the event that a student or staff member does not complete a screener prior to coming to school, one will need to be created before they can fully reenter the facility. Students and staff who have not completed a screener will report to the office to complete a paper screener and have their temperature taken with a no-touch, infrared thermometer.

If any of the symptoms or exposure asked on the screener are present or if their temperature is 100.4 or greater, then the student or staff member will immediately be placed into a predetermined, isolated space at the school site (e.g. nurses station, unused classroom, etc.) with adult supervision and caregivers will be called to pick up their child. Students who consistently do not complete either a paper or electronic screener prior to entering campus may be required to have a caregiver escort them on to campus and complete the screener for the remainder of the year or for an amount of time determined by the site principal. Families who refuse to screen may be placed into an alternative instructional program, including Distance Learning.

If You Cannot Come to Campus Because of the Screening Results

For those screening positive for a symptom or for close contact with someone with COVID-19, you should stay at home, **contact your healthcare provider**, and consider being tested for COVID-19. Students and staff who remain home because they were symptomatic but did **not** test positive for COVID-19 may return to campus no less than 24 hours after symptoms end without the use of medication. All other students and staff should follow orders by personal healthcare providers and public health officials in regards to quarantining and returning to campus.

Screening at School

In addition to the passive screening performed by caregivers each morning, school staff will also perform observational screening. This form of active screening requires that, if a student is observed exhibiting any of the symptoms of COVID-19 or if a student self-reports that they are symptomatic, the staff member follows the procedure in the school site safety plan to re-assess the student, including taking a temperature, and sending the student home if they are symptomatic. Caregivers will always be notified if their child is exhibiting symptoms of an illness and required to pick up their child.

In extreme circumstances, such as severe difficulty breathing, unconsciousness, or other life threatening situations, the school may also call for emergency transport. Parents will always be notified if transport is required.

Universal Precautions

Three of the most important measures that students, families, staff, and community can take are wearing appropriate cloth face coverings, washing hands and maintaining good hygiene, and physically distancing. Another important measure, especially in schools, is cohorting.

FACE COVERINGS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and Del Norte Public Health state that wearing a **face covering**, when combined with physical distancing of at least six feet and frequent handwashing, significantly reduces the risk of transmitting coronavirus when in public.

Per CDPH, a Face Covering means a covering made of cloth, fabric, or other soft or permeable material, without holes, that covers only the nose and mouth and surrounding areas of the lower face. A face covering may include a scarf or bandana or a homemade covering made from a t-shirt, sweatshirt, or towel, held on with rubber bands or otherwise. A face covering should not be medical-grade or use a valve device. A face covering should be considered essential clothing that is laundered at home by hand or machine washed and worn to school each day.

The District will provide each child and staff with two cloth masks. Disposable non-medical masks will also be available, as well as higher grade masks for higher risk

situations. (See Appendix B for PPE recommendations/requirements in various situations.) Students and staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

Face coverings must be used by all students over the age of 2 and by all staff when arriving/departing school, in any common/public areas, or when waiting for/leaving buses and other transportation, unless the person is exempt under CDPH guidelines.

The following guidance is for students in classrooms only:

STUDENTS

Age	Face Covering Requirement
Under 2 years old	No
2 years old – 2 nd grade	Strongly encouraged**
3 rd grade – High School	Yes, unless exempt

***Face coverings are strongly encouraged for young children between two years old and second grade, if they can be worn properly. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear them properly.*

WHEN FACE COVERINGS ARE NOT REQUIRED

A cloth face covering or face shield should be removed for meals, snacks, naptime, or outdoor recreation, or when it needs to be replaced.

CONSEQUENCES FOR REFUSAL TO WEAR A MASK WITHOUT AN EXEMPTION

In order to comply with this guidance, schools must exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one provided by the school. Schools should develop protocols to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions. Schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus.

“Students should not be excluded from class if occasionally or consistently **unable** to wear a face covering.” (RANCHO, 7/9/20)

STAFF

- All staff must use face covering in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection. For staff unable to wear a face covering, an exemption must be on file with Human Resources. Staff with an exemption may wear a face shield.
- In limited situations where a face coverings cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (i.e. communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield can be used instead of a cloth face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.

How to Care for Your Face Covering

Wear your Mask Correctly

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- CDC does not recommend use of masks or cloth masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent

Take Off Your Mask Carefully, When You're Home

- Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- Fold outside corners together
- Place mask in the washing machine (learn more about how to wash masks)
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing.

Clean Your Mask

- You can include your mask with your regular laundry.
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask.

Washing by hand

- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleach products, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection.
- Use bleach containing 5.25%–8.25% sodium hypochlorite. Do not use a bleach product if the percentage is not in this range or is not specified.
- Ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
- Ensure adequate ventilation.
- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per gallon of room temperature water
or 4 teaspoons of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Soak the mask in the bleach solution for 5 minutes.
- Discard the bleach solution down the drain and rinse the mask thoroughly with cool or room temperature water.

Make sure to completely dry the mask after washing.

Dryer

Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry.

Air dry

Lay flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, place the mask in direct sunlight.

Other Considerations

- Students attending the Early Head Start will not use face coverings.
- Students in grades preschool- 2nd grade are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings.
- All students in grades 3-12 will wear cloth face coverings to limit the spread of COVID 19 virus, unless they have a waiver. Alternative face coverings, such as face shields, may be worn if the waiver allows.
- Masks **will** be worn in all public and common areas on school campuses, as well as classrooms.
- *Respirators and masks with exhaust vents do not prevent the spread of COVID 19 and will be covered with a cloth mask.*

Face covering exemptions include:

- *Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.*

- *Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.*
- *Persons who are obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service.*
- *Persons who are . . . eating or drinking.*
- *Persons who are engaged in outdoor recreation.*
- *Persons who are incarcerated. [Juvenile Halls], as part of their mitigation plans, will have specific guidance on the wearing of face coverings or masks for both inmates and staff.*

“If a student refuses [to wear a face covering], the student must be excluded from on-campus instruction, unless they are exempt, until they are willing to wear a face covering. Students excluded on this basis should be offered other educational opportunities through distance learning. Disposable paper masks are thinner and may be less effective, but may still be used as a face covering to meet the requirement.” (CDPH, 8/3/20)

HAND WASHING AND HYGIENE

Students and staff should wash their hands frequently throughout the day, including before and after eating; after coughing or sneezing; after classes where they handle shared items, such as outside recreation, art, or shop; and before and after using the restroom.

- Students and staff should wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and running warm or cold running water, rubbing thoroughly after application. *Soap products marketed as “antimicrobial” are not necessary or recommended.*
- Staff should model and practice handwashing. For example, for lower grade levels, use bathroom time as an opportunity to reinforce healthy habits and monitor proper handwashing.
- Students and staff should use fragrance-free hand sanitizer when handwashing is not practicable. Sanitizer must be rubbed into hands until completely dry. *Note: frequent handwashing is more effective than the use of hand sanitizers.*
- Ethyl alcohol-based hand sanitizers are preferred and should be used when there is the potential of unsupervised use by children.
 - Isopropyl hand sanitizers are more toxic when ingested or absorbed in skin.
 - Do not use hand sanitizers that may contain methanol which can be hazardous when ingested or absorbed.
 - Children under age 9 should only use hand sanitizer under adult supervision. Call Poison Control if consumed: 1-800-222-1222.
- The District will ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, face coverings, and hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

CDPH, CDC, and the local Public Health Officer have communicated that the physical distancing, to a large extent, is one of the most difficult aspects of school reopening. With physical distancing, it is important to remember that hygiene and mask wearing play a large role in the distance between students and the distancing recommendations.

Distancing on the Bus

CDPH recommends “maximizing” space between students and between students and the driver.

The Regional Association of Northern California Health Officers state that Transportation should “maximize physical distancing between students on the bus by limiting available seats as practicable and no more than 2 students per seat.” In addition, the document states that bus riders should be seated a minimum of six (6) feet from the driver when both are seated. Windows should also be open, when practical, to allow for maximized air flow.

Transportation will:

- Ensure 6 feet of distancing between the driver and riders when seated. Establish a “quarantine” seat to isolate students who may exhibit COVID-like symptoms during the time the bus is in transit.
- Ensure that the seat will be a minimum of 6 feet from the driver and any other students.
- Seat students in a manner that meets the criteria above and maximizes seat occupancy of remaining seats to not more than two students per seat.

Arriving and Departing Campus

Per CDPH guidelines, schools should:

- Minimize contact at school between students, staff, families and the community at the beginning and end of the school day. Prioritize minimizing contact between adults at all times.
- Stagger arrival and drop off-times and locations as consistently as practicable as to minimize scheduling challenges for families.
- Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible. Put in place other protocols to limit direct contact with others as much as practicable.

Each school site will have included in their site safety plan a protocol or protocols unique to their campus that address arrival and departure from campus.

Distancing in the Classroom

CDPH guidance is to “maximize space between seating and desks. Distance teacher and other staff desks at least six feet away from student desks. Consider ways to establish separation of students through other means if practicable, such as, six feet between desks, where

practicable, partitions between desks, markings on classroom floors to promote distancing or arranging desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.

As a group, the regional public health officers indicate that younger students are less able to feasibly distance and that older students should be required to maximize distancing, in conjunction with mandatory mask wearing. RANCHO further defines CDPH guidance as follows:

Social distancing prevention strategies by age group – on a spectrum, emphasizing stable cohorting for elementary students (less feasible to physically distance and consistently use face coverings) and physical distancing plus face coverings for middle/junior high/high school students (less feasible to cohort).

Figure courtesy of Santa Clara County Public Health



Elementary schools:

- *Stable classroom cohorts (up to standard class size at each respective grade level) are maintained throughout each school day, and through each quarter or semester, with an assigned primary cohort teacher.*

Middle schools/junior high/high schools:

- *Spacing of student desks is maximized.*

All schools:

- *Class size is minimized as much as practicable and space between seating and desks is maximized, ideally 6 feet and a minimum of 3 feet.*
- *Distance teacher and staff desks at least six feet away from students to minimize adult-to-child disease transmission.*
- *Assign stable seating arrangements and document attendance for students and adults to ensure close contacts within classrooms are minimized and easily identifiable.*

Each site principal will ensure that teacher and staff desks are placed a minimum of six (6) feet from student desks, and that student desks are placed a minimum of three (3) feet from one another.

Distancing in Other Areas of the School

Each school site has unique features and needs. Site safety plans will more specifically indicate how distancing will be addressed on each school site. CDPH guidance requires that site plans consider:

- Limiting nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving other groups at the same time.
- Limiting communal activities where practicable. [Or] stagger use, properly space occupants and disinfect in between uses.
- Using non-classroom space for instruction, including regular use of outdoor space, weather permitting.
- Minimizing congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable. For example, establish more ways to enter and exit a campus, create staggered passing times when necessary or when students cannot stay in one room and create guidelines on the floor that students can follow to enable physical distancing while passing.
- Eliminating the use of lockers and moving to block scheduling, which supports the creation of cohort groups and reduces changes of classrooms.
- Serving meals outdoors or in classrooms instead of cafeterias or group dining rooms where practicable. Where cafeterias or group dining rooms must be used, keep students together in their cohort groups, ensure physical distancing, and consider assigned seating.
- Holding recess activities in separated areas designated by class.

Understanding Cohorts

Because the virus that causes COVID-19 is more easily transmitted when someone infected with it is in close proximity to others, physical distancing, student grouping and thoughtful use of existing space are key factors in mitigating risk in the era of COVID-19. Creating appropriate cohorts of students and staff who stay together and avoid contact with other cohorts is a necessary and powerful tool to prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 while also providing opportunities for in-person interaction in a safe context.

When cohorting is in effect, a suspected or confirmed case requires that the members of the cohort who have been in contact with the individual in question be quarantined and tested. Without cohorting, many more members of the school community may need to be quarantined and/or the entire school closed.

State guidance distinguishes between 3 scenarios for returning students to campus for in person instruction:

- [Countywide reopening](#)
- [TK-6 waivers](#)

- [Early return for small-group targeted support group](#)

Grouping students into stable cohorts and sticking to [Six Key Considerations](#) can help increase safety and must be done in all of these scenarios, with the most stringent cohorting requirements in place for the early return to in-person small-group targeted instruction option. Cohorts will typically require rethinking lunch, recess, and electives, as well as departmentalized instruction that would normally create different configurations of students and staff for many classes, thus dramatically increasing the possibilities for transmission.

CDPH states that “to reduce possibilities for infection, students must remain in the same space and in cohorts as small and consistent as practicable, including for recess and lunch. Keep the same students and teacher or staff with each group, to the greatest extent practicable.”

To achieve this goal, Del Norte County schools will utilize the stable cohort guidelines to minimize cohort mixing and interaction:

1. All students and staff will follow the guidance in this document, as required by CDPH and local public health;
2. In Phase 1, small cohorts will typically be configured as follows:
 - Cohorts of no more than 14 students and two adults or 16 people total, in any configuration, will be self-contained in K-8. This means that when the cohort is in attendance, only the classroom teacher and support staff assigned to the cohort will interact with the cohort for prolonged periods of time. In classes needing more support services in the classroom, fewer students can be served at one time. Service providers should, to the fullest extent possible, work with students one-on-one, with appropriate PPE and universal precautions, in a location outside of the classroom that has been disinfected. If that is not possible, due to the service being provided, the provider should maximize distancing from students, utilize PPE recommended for “Moderate Risk,” continue universal precautions, and minimize time in the classroom.
 - Cohorts in 9-12 will not exceed 15 students and will not interact with other cohorts as part of the normal day. These cohorts will also ensure that only the classroom teacher and support staff assigned to the cohort will interact with the cohort for prolonged periods of time. In classes needing more support services in the classroom, fewer students can be served at one time. If the instructional model at the school requires teachers or other staff to rotate into rooms with students or student to move as a cohort into another room, teachers and staff shall maintain a distance from students of no less than six (6) feet. Failure to maintain appropriate distancing will require a revision of the school instructional plan. Service providers should, to the fullest extent possible, work with students one-on-one, with appropriate PPE and universal precautions, in a location outside of the classroom that has been disinfected. If that is not possible, due to

the service being provided, the provider should maximize distancing from students, utilize PPE recommended for “Moderate Risk,” continue universal precautions, and minimize time in the classroom.

- Buses will maintain cohorts of one school only, with students who have pre-registered to ride the bus. No other students will be allowed on the bus. Students will be seated as far apart as practicable, but in no circumstance will more than two students in the bus cohort be seated together.

3. In Phase 2,

- Cohorts of no more than 14 student and only the essential adults required to implement the program or services will be self-contained in K-8. This means that when the cohort is in attendance, only the classroom teacher and support staff assigned to the cohort will interact with the cohort for prolonged periods of time. Service providers should, to the fullest extent possible, work with students one-on-one, with appropriate PPE and universal precautions, in a location outside of the classroom that has been disinfected. If that is not possible, due to the service being provided, the provider should maximize distancing from students, utilize PPE recommended for “Moderate Risk,” continue universal precautions, and minimize time in the classroom.
- Cohorts in 9-12 will not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ of the students assigned to the class and will not interact with other cohorts as part of the normal day. These cohorts will also ensure that only the classroom teacher and support staff assigned to the cohort will interact with the cohort for prolonged periods of time. If the instructional model at the school requires teachers or other staff to rotate into rooms with students or student to move as a cohort into another room, teachers and staff shall maintain a distance from students of no less than six (6) feet. Failure to maintain appropriate distancing will require a revision of the school instructional plan. Service providers should, to the fullest extent possible, work with students one-on-one, with appropriate PPE and universal precautions, in a location outside of the classroom that has been disinfected. If that is not possible, due to the service being provided, the provider should maximize distancing from students, utilize PPE recommended for “Moderate Risk,” continue universal precautions, and minimize time in the classroom.
- Buses will maintain cohorts of one school only, with students who have pre-registered to ride the bus. No other students will be allowed on the bus. Students will be seated as far apart as practicable, but in no circumstance will more than two students in the bus cohort be seated together.

4. In Phase 3, cohorts will typically be configured as follows:

- Cohorts in K-8 will be comprised, at a maximum, of $\frac{1}{2}$ of the students enrolled in a class and will be self-contained. This means that when the cohort is in attendance, only the classroom teacher and support staff assigned to the cohort

will interact with the cohort for prolonged periods of time. Service providers should, to the fullest extent possible, work with students one-on-one, with appropriate PPE and universal precautions, in a location outside of the classroom that has been disinfected. If that is not possible, due to the service being provided, the provider should maximize distancing from students, utilize PPE recommended for “Moderate Risk,” continue universal precautions, and minimize time in the classroom.

- Cohorts in 9-12 will not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ of the class enrollment and will not interact as part of the normal day. These cohorts will also ensure that only the classroom teacher and support staff assigned to the cohort will interact with the cohort for prolonged periods of time. If the instructional model at the school requires teachers or other staff to rotate into rooms with students or student to move as a cohort into another room, teachers and staff shall maintain a distance from students of no less than six (6) feet. Failure to maintain appropriate distancing will require a revision of the school instructional plan. Service providers should, to the fullest extent possible, work with students one-on-one, with appropriate PPE and universal precautions, in a location outside of the classroom that has been disinfected. If that is not possible, due to the service being provided, the provider should maximize distancing from students, utilize PPE recommended for “Moderate Risk,” continue universal precautions, and minimize time in the classroom.
 - Buses will maintain cohorts of one school only, with students who have pre-registered to ride the bus. No other students will be allowed on the bus. Students will be seated as far apart as practicable, but in no circumstance will more than two students in the bus cohort be seated together.
5. After School Program cohorts will not exceed 10 students and will not interact as part of the program. Once established the cohorts will be strictly maintained for a time no less than 9 weeks.

A stable cohort should take 2-3 weeks to establish. Once established, the cohort should remain closed for a minimum of 9 weeks.

The only time a cohort will accept other students is when a child enrolls in school and is added to a cohort, especially if the child qualifies under the McKinney-Vento Act or as a Homeless Youth, or if for a reason beyond the control of the child they are required to move to another school or cohort. In no circumstance should a child be moved from one cohort to another because of a student or caregiver request.

This is not a “normal” year. Due to the precautions being taken, class-to-class movement, intradistrict transfers, parent/caregiver requests, and other discretionary movements will not be allowed, if they disrupt the instructional cohort.

Training, Information, and Other Resources

Multiple strategies will be employed to communicate to students, families and staff based on our guidelines and expectations aimed at reducing the transmission of COVID-19.

As a district, we want to ensure that everyone is using hygiene and health-related practices that are research-based, clearly defined and communicated, effectively implemented and diligently enforced. We will ensure that this guide, site safety plans, the District's Epidemic/Pandemic Response Plan, and links to all guidance documents are available through the District's website, the website for each school, and availability of the information communicated to parents through email, social media, and other media. We will also provide a video that will be shown at least once per six (6) weeks, when students are attending in-person, that outlines COVID symptoms, screening and safety measures (wearing of masks, hand washing, sanitizing, disinfecting work area, and distancing).

The district has provided training on handwashing, mask wearing, and distancing, as well as screening. Training on COVID-19 related safety has been required through the Keenan Safe Schools portal on the DNUSD.org website for every staff member. The required trainings included Coronavirus Awareness, IPM for Teachers and Office Staff, Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Prevention, and Coronavirus: Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Workspace. Instructional videos, staff resources, guidance documents and other agency resources are provided to staff at www.dnUSD.org/COVID19 under the staff resources tab on the left hand column.

Site administrators are also providing campus-based staff with a walk-through and practice of appropriate routines, such as arrival and dismissal, hand-washing procedure, covering your cough, etc. prior to the first day of a Phase 3 return.

Specific professional development will continue to be held for specific job groups, such as custodians, bus drivers, nurses, or office staff, who may deal specifically with students or staff that exhibit symptoms.

In addition, key access points of buses, campuses, bathrooms, cafeterias, will have specific messaging as appropriate.

The district Communications Department will develop district wide messaging and assist sites with site specific communications to be delivered through district and campus websites, social media, mobile app, periodic home mailers, email, school marquees, specialized email groups, PTAs/booster clubs and other parent groups.

Every staff member, volunteer, and interested community partner has a role in the communication of these expectations and guidelines and is an integral part of the safety process.

Student, Family, and Staff Protocols: A Day at School

Getting to School

Before Departing for School

Students and Families

An adult caregiver must complete a daily self-assessment screener for each child. The screener will be provided by the District and may be paper or digital. If a child is not screened prior to coming to school, they will be screened at school and may immediately be sent home if symptomatic or reporting having been in close proximity to a known COVID positive person.

Staff

Each staff member must complete a daily self-assessment screener. The screener will be provided by the District and may be paper or digital. If a staff member not screened prior to coming to school, they will be required to self-screen at school and may immediately be sent home if symptomatic or reporting having been in close proximity to a known COVID positive person.

On the Way to School

Riding the Bus

Each child riding the bus will have previously pre-registered to ride the bus. The bus driver will not allow a child onto the bus who has not registered, is not scheduled to ride that day, or does not normally ride or picked up at a particular stop.

Each child riding the bus and the driver will have the appropriate face covering and driver will have each child use hand sanitizer as they enter, take their temperature with an installed infrared thermometer, and seat the child per CDPH and RANCHO guidance. Students will be instructed to lower windows, if practicable. Students will remain seated in their assigned seat until they arrive at school and will keep their face covering on during the entire trip. The students shall be seated no less than six (6) feet from the driver at all times.

Students who do not have a face covering will be provided with a disposable mask by the driver.

Students should also remember that no breakfast will be served in the cafeteria in the morning before school, but students will receive breakfast in the classroom.

Walking

Caregivers will ensure that each child walking to school arrives at school when the school is open. Due to guidance surrounding physical distancing, mixing of cohorts, etc., those arriving

early may not be able to enter campus. Students should also remember that no breakfast will be served in the cafeteria in the morning before school, but students will receive breakfast in the classroom.

Riding in a Vehicle

When riding with their family, students should follow the directions of their parents or caregiver. However, if transporting children from more than one family, it is highly recommended that everyone in the vehicle wear a CDPH compliant face covering. Due to guidance surrounding physical distancing, mixing of cohorts, etc., those arriving early may not be able to enter campus. Students should also remember that no breakfast will be served in the cafeteria in the morning before school, but students will receive breakfast in the classroom.

Arriving on Campus

When arriving on campus, school sites may have different instructions for buses, vehicles and walkers due to the unique needs of each site. Site principals and staff should share these instructions prior to beginning Phase 3.

Assigned staff supervise student arrival and dismissal, ensure students are wearing masks, and encourage distancing (except with family members).

Monitor students to discourage congregating.

Arriving on a Bus

Bus riders will be dismissed from the bus by driver in an orderly manner that spaces students out as they get off of the bus. Students are to continue wearing their face covering and to go directly to their classroom. Students will not be allowed to go into the gym, multipurpose room, playground, office or other spaces within the school.

Arriving Walkers

Students are to put on their face covering as soon as they arrive on campus, if it is not already on, and to go directly to their classroom. Students will not be allowed to go into the gym, multipurpose room, playground, office or other spaces within the school.

Arriving by Vehicle

Students who have not already done so should put on their face covering prior to exiting their vehicle. Students are to continue wearing their face covering and to go directly to their classroom. Students will not be allowed to go into the gym, multipurpose room, playground, office or other spaces within the school.

At School

Entering Campus

All students and staff will enter campus as instructed by the site administrator and as outlined in the school site safety plan.

Upon entering, all students and staff will use hand sanitizer provided at their assigned entrance and go directly to their classroom or workspace. Students or staff who were unable to complete their screening prior to coming to campus must report immediately to the office to complete the daily screening process. If the student or staff member is cleared then they may go to their classroom or workspace. If the student or staff member is symptomatic or reports having been in close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19, they will be isolated until they can be transported home.

Students and will wear face coverings at all times while on campus, unless exempt or not required to do so based on CDPH guidance. Students without a face covering should be provided with one upon entering the school.

Entering the Classroom

All students and staff will enter the classroom as instructed by the site administrator and or teacher.

Upon entering the classroom at any time, all students and staff will be wearing their face coverings as required by CDPH, unless they are exempt.

Any time students and staff enter the classroom, they will wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer provided in their classroom or workspace.

Students who were unable to complete their daily screening prior to coming to campus and did not report to the office must be sent immediately to the office to complete the daily screening process. If the student is cleared then they may go to their classroom. If the student or staff member is symptomatic or reports having been in close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19, they will be isolated until they can be transported home. Students who are ill will not be allowed to remain at school.

Students should be seated in their assigned seats immediately upon arrival and avoid close interactions with one another and especially adults in the classroom.

In the Classroom

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast and lunch will typically be eaten in the classroom but may also be eaten outdoors.

Meals will be served individually plated or bagged meals, and students and staff should avoid sharing food, drinks, and utensils and buffet or family-style meals will not be allowed.

Students will not be allowed to go into the gym, multipurpose room, or any other space for meals, unless eating in a communal space is clearly part of the school site safety plan and includes minimizing groups, maximizing physical distance, and addresses cleaning and disinfecting.

Depending on individual school bell schedules, students may be provided with a take and go meal for lunch.

Student desks should be cleaned and disinfected following meals, using alcohol wipes provided by the district.

Instruction

Classroom instruction will be the same in many ways but may be very different in others. Some of the following are new protocols for classrooms for the 2020-2021 school year:

- Schools and teachers may use outdoor space for activities, if practicable.
- The movement of students and staff will be as minimal as practicable.
- Seating and desks will be further apart (at least three feet), and soft surface seating may be removed from classrooms to aid with cleaning and disinfection. Teacher and other staff desks will be at least six feet away from student desks. Other forms of separation between students may include partitions between desks, markings on classroom floors to promote distancing or arranging desks or other seating in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.
- Activities will be redesigned for smaller groups and classrooms may be rearranged, including furniture and play spaces, to maintain maximum separation.
- Staff will instruct students on how to maximizing spacing and ways to minimize movement in both indoor and outdoor spaces that are easy for students to understand and are developmentally appropriate.
- Activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets such as band and choir practice and performances are not permitted.
- Activities that involve singing must only take place outdoors.
- Staff will implement procedures for turning in assignments to minimize contact.
- Staff working directly with students in an environment where they will be less than six (6) feet away may be using privacy boards or clear screens to increase and enforce separation between staff and students.
- Sharing of materials, supplies and equipment will also be avoided or limited. Students should have their own materials and supplies, including reusable water bottles. Shared equipment will be disinfected between uses.
- Each child's belongings should be separated and kept in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies or areas.
- The school and district will ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials (art supplies, equipment, etc.) to the extent practicable. The teacher may also limit use of supplies and equipment to one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between uses.
- Students will avoid sharing electronic devices, clothing, toys, books and other games or learning aids as much as practicable. Where sharing must occur, staff will clean and disinfect between uses.

Remember, too, that staff and students will need to comply at all times, with one of the following:

1. Cloth face covering must be worn at all times by all adults and by students in 3rd -12th grades while attending in person. Face coverings are strongly recommended for preschool - 2nd grade students, but not mandatory. Cloth face coverings may be removed for instructional reasons only, if replaced by a face shield, and immediately put back on after the instruction.
2. Exempt students and staff must wear a face shield, if they are able. If unable to wear a shield, students and staff should maintain a minimum of six (6) feet of distance, and staff working with the student should use PPE as recommended or required. (Appendix B)
3. Students who are not exempt and refuse to wear a cloth face covering must be excluded from in-person instruction until they are willing to wear the face covering. Repeated refusal to wear the face covering will result in the child being placed on distance learning.

For students or staff who forget a face covering or are unable to bring a face covering, a disposable replacement will be provided for them. No student will be denied access to learning for not having a face covering.

Other protocols

Seating charts for each cohort should be created and kept current to assist with contact tracing or in the event of a positive COVID diagnosis that requires caregiver contact.

Exiting the Classroom

Leaving for a Short Time

If students and staff leave the classroom for a short period of time (recess, lunch, restroom, etc.), all students and staff should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer prior to leaving. Students should leave all items that are not essential to their destination and shared items, such as balls, group jump roping ropes, and other shared equipment are highly discouraged.

Leaving for the Day

When students and staff leave the classroom for the day, they should follow these steps:

1. Put all supplies and/or materials into a personal pouch, bag, box, or other storage container and take the container home or place the container in a space provided by the teacher.
2. Ensure personal belongings are taken home each day to be cleaned.
3. Ensure that all papers and other items have been removed from desktops and other high touch surfaces, so that evening custodial staff can properly clean and disinfect.
4. Have students pick up paper and other debris from the floor around their seating area. Due to enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, custodial staff may not have time to complete all normal work, such as vacuuming, each evening.
5. Store all class materials and supplies in a manner that does not obstruct the hard surfaces to be disinfected.
6. Ensure that students and staff are wearing face coverings, as mandated by CDPH.

7. All students and staff will wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer.
8. Staff will walk students to their assigned exit(s) or ASES location at their assigned time(s) as identified in the school site safety plan.
9. Students will exit the school without loitering, congregating, or engaging in any unapproved activities.

Non-Classroom Spaces

Students and staff will remain together in their stable instructional cohort as discussed earlier in this guide. There will, however, be times when the class will need to go outside for break or recess, go to the restroom, etc. In most instances, the school site safety plan will cover school specific protocols, and each school's bell schedule will help students and staff distance by identifying playground times. The following guidance will also need to be followed or further defined in the site safety plan:

- Nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving other groups at the same time should be severely limited, if allowed at all. If allowable, the visitors, volunteers, or activities need to be approved in advance by site and district administration, and safety protocols need to be followed and monitored by the site principal.
- Limit or avoid all communal activities or use of communal space involving other cohorts, where practicable, including libraries, computer labs, gyms, etc. Alternatively, stagger use, properly space occupants and disinfect in between uses.
- Consider use of non-classroom space for instruction, including regular use of outdoor space, weather permitting.
- Minimize congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable. For example, establish more ways to enter and exit a campus, create staggered passing times when necessary or when students cannot stay in one room and create guidelines on the floor that students can follow to enable physical distancing while passing. In addition, schools can consider eliminating the use of lockers and moving to block scheduling, which supports the creation of cohort groups and reduces changes of classrooms. School site safety plans will detail how this will be done at each site.
- Consider holding recess activities in separated areas designated by class.

Potentially, the most complicated use of space is the restroom. School site safety plans should indicate protocols for restroom use, which may include restroom breaks scheduled by class and by restroom facility, a restroom only to be used by those ill and/or in isolation and awaiting a ride home, training for students on hand washing after using the restroom, and strategies for managing restroom during class time (e.g. individual hall passes, restroom escorts by monitors, etc.). Under no circumstances should multiple classrooms be dismissed simultaneously to use the restrooms.

Although students are supposed to wash their hands after using the restroom, they are also required to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon their return to the classroom. Handwashing protocol and the use of hand sanitizer will be reinforced often.

Increased disinfecting by custodial staff will also occur throughout the school day.

After School

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities.

- Outdoor and indoor sporting events, assemblies, dances, rallies, field trips, and other activities that require close contact or that would promote congregating are not permitted at this time.
- For sports that cannot be conducted with sufficient distancing or cohorting, only physical conditioning and training is permitted and ONLY where physical distancing can be maintained. Conditioning and training should focus on individual skill building (e.g., running drills and body weight resistance training) and should take place outside, where practicable. Indoor physical conditioning and training is allowed only in counties where gyms and fitness centers are allowed to operate indoors. (See the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) for more information or contact Public Health at (707) 464-0861)
- Avoid equipment sharing, and if unavoidable, clean and disinfect shared equipment between use by different people to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.
- Consistent with guidance for gyms and fitness facilities, cloth face coverings must be worn during indoor physical conditioning and training or physical education classes (except when showering). Activities that require heavy exertion should be conducted outside in a physically distanced manner without face coverings. Activities conducted inside should be those that do not require heavy exertion and can be done with a face covering. Players should take a break from exercise if any difficulty in breathing is noted and should change their mask or face covering if it becomes wet and sticks to the player's face and obstructs breathing. Masks that restrict airflow under heavy exertion (such as N-95 masks) are not advised for exercise.
- Youth sports and physical education are permitted only when the following can be maintained: (1) physical distancing of at least six feet; and (2) a stable cohort, such as a class, that limits the risks of transmission. Activities should take place outside to the maximum extent practicable.
- Youth sports programs and schools should provide information to parents or guardians regarding this and related guidance, along with the safety measures that will be in place in these settings with which parents or guardians must comply.

For more information on high school CIF section and Humboldt-Del Norte CIF, visit <http://www.cifncs.org/landing/index>. Middle school athletics will be the same as or more restrictive than CIF rules.

Departing Campus

When departing campus, school sites may have different instructions for buses, vehicles and walkers due to the unique needs of each site. Site principals and staff should share these instructions prior to beginning Phase 3.

Departing on a Bus

Each child riding the bus will have previously pre-registered to ride the bus. The bus driver will not allow a child onto the bus who has not registered, is not scheduled to ride that day, or does not normally ride or dropped off at a particular stop.

Each child riding the bus and the driver will have the appropriate face covering and driver will have each child use hand sanitizer as they enter, take their temperature with an installed infrared thermometer, and seat the child per CDPH and RANCHO guidance. Students will be instructed to lower windows, if practicable. Students will remain seated in their assigned seat until they arrive at school and will keep their face covering on during the entire trip. The students shall be seated no less than six (6) feet from the driver at all times.

Students who do not have a face covering will be provided with a disposable mask by the driver.

Departing Walkers

Students are to keep face coverings on until they are off of the campus. Students will not be allowed to go into the gym, multipurpose room, playground, office or other spaces within the school.

Departing by Vehicle

Students must keep their face covering on until they enter their vehicle. Once in the vehicle, students should follow the directions of their parents or caregiver. However, if transporting children from more than one family, it is highly recommended that everyone in the vehicle wear a CDPH compliant face covering.

Attending the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program

Students attending the ASES program should be travel to the ASES room as indicated by the site safety plan, which may include staggered dismissal or being escorted to the program. Specific information regarding the ASES program will be provided to the family by ASES staff.

Students and staff are required to wear face coverings while going to and leaving the program and are required to wash hands and/or sanitize as they enter and exit the program rooms.

For the purposes of mitigating COVID-19, ASES rooms should be considered classrooms and their own cohort.

DISCIPLINE STEPS RELATED TO COVID-19

Discipline regarding COVID-19 related infractions is not called out specifically in law. All school-based discipline must be based on Education Code violations. The following are guidance on addressing COVID-19 related situations:

Coughing, Sneezing, or Spitting on Another Student

The following steps will be taken if a student intentionally coughs, sneezes or spits on another student with the intention of infecting the other student with COVID-19 while on campus or at a school related event or causing the fear of infection or potential infection:

1. The student will notify the closest staff member, and the staff member will notify the site administrator.
2. The administrator shall remove the students quickly to investigate the incident.
3. Students will be taken to the office for screening, including a temperature check.
4. The office staff will notify the administrator immediately about the findings of the screening. Additionally, based on the screening, the appropriate steps will be taken e.g. for a positive screening, follow the protocol for potentially highly contagious individual, including enhanced PPE and requiring that the child be picked up by their caregiver.
5. Notify parents/ guardians of each student involved in the alleged incident.
6. The administrator will investigate the allegation to determine intentionality.
7. If the alleged behavior is determined to be intentional, the administrator will use CA Education Code 48900a1- Causing or attempting to cause physical injury. The administrator will also notify appropriate law enforcement of the act.
8. The offense and consequence will be input into Aeries within 24 hours.

Refusal to Wear a Mask

The following steps will be taken if a student refuses to wear a face covering while on campus:

1. If a student does not have a face covering or an exemption for a face shield, staff should offer the student a disposable, non-medical mask.
2. If the student refuses to wear the mask, the staff member will immediately ensure at least six (6) feet of distance from the student and other students in the room.
3. The staff member will notify the site administrator, who will remove the student from the room or common area.
4. The student will be taken to the office for screening, including a temperature check.
5. The office staff will notify the administrator immediately about the findings of the screening. Additionally, based on the screening, the appropriate steps will be taken e.g.

for a positive screening, follow the protocol for potentially highly contagious individual, including enhanced PPE and requiring that the child be picked up by their caregiver.

6. The parent/guardian will be notified of the incident while the student is in the office. The parent/guardian will be notified that the CDPH requires that students wear a face covering and that refusal to wear the covering will result in placement in distance learning.
7. The student will be offered the mask again. If accepted, the student will be able to return to class, so long as they have passed the screening.

If the student refuses to wear a mask a second time, the student will not be allowed to return to in-person learning until:

- 1) The student and their parent/guardian have met with the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and
- 2) Signed a behavior contract acknowledging the mandate to wear a mask and agreeing to wear the mask.

If the student and parent/guardian refuse to meet or do not respond within 5 school days, the student will be placed into distance learning.

Failure to abide by the contract will result in immediate removal from the campus and assignment to distance learning.

8. If the student or parent/guardian refuses the mask, the student will not be allowed to return to in-person learning until:
 - 1) The student and their parent/guardian have met with the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and
 - 2) Signed a behavior contract acknowledging the mandate to wear a mask and agreeing to wear the mask.

If the student and parent/guardian refuse to meet or do not respond within 5 school days, the student will be placed into distance learning.

Failure to abide by the contract will result in immediate removal from the campus and assignment to distance learning.

COVID-19 Symptom/Diagnosis Response

What to Do If Students or Staff Are Symptomatic

For those self-screening and find that they are symptomatic, the following steps should be taken:

1. Stay or return home, if you are able. *If an emergency situation exists, where you are unable to breathe, are losing consciousness, etc., contact 911 immediately for transport to an emergency facility.*
2. Contact your healthcare provider. They may perform an over-the-phone screening, make an appointment to see you, and/or provide any other necessary advice.
3. Consider being tested for COVID-19.
4. Caregivers should notify their child's school, and staff should notify their site principal.
5. Follow any guidance provided by your healthcare provider in regards to remaining at home.

What if the Test is Negative?

If the student or staff tests negative for the COVID virus, they may return to campus **no less than 24 hours** after the symptom(s) disappear without the use of medications, such as aspirin, acetaminophen, cough syrup, etc.

What if the Test is Positive?

If a test comes back positive, the following actions will be taken:

1. Public Health will be notified.
2. Individuals who test positive and who **have had symptoms**, may return to work or school when:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, AND
 - At least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without use of fever-reducing medications), AND
 - Other symptoms have improved.
3. Individuals who test positive but who **never develop symptoms**, may return to work or school 10 days after the date of their first positive test.
4. The District and public health will identify contacts and exclude those contacts, which may include an entire cohort, for 14 days after the last date the case was present at school while infectious.
5. The District will clean and disinfect the room, especially those areas where the positive case spent significant time.
6. Notify the cohort and possibly school community of a positive case.

Return to school or work after a COVID-19 positive test should always be recommended by your healthcare provider or public health official.

“Requiring a negative SARS-CoV-2 test prior to returning to work or school is not recommended. Instead, employers and schools should follow the time- and symptom-based approach described above in determining when individuals can return to work or school following COVID-19 diagnosis.” CDPH, 8/24/2020

When Would a School Close?

Individual school closure is recommended based on the number of cases, the percentage of the students/staff that are positive for COVID-19 and following consultation with the Local Health Officer.

Individual school closure may be appropriate when there are multiple positive cases in multiple cohorts at a school or when at least 5 percent of the total number of student/staff are positive cases within a 14-day period, depending on the size and physical layout of the school.

The Local Health Officer may also determine school closure is warranted for other reasons, including results from public health investigation or other local epidemiological data.

A superintendent should close a school district, in consultation with the local public health department, if 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days.

Districts may typically reopen after 14 days, in consultation with the local public health department, if all other guidelines provided by the California Department of Public Health are met.