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# Coffee with Superintendent

— Questions and Answers —

August 2, 2021

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# Welcome and Thank you for Attending Today!

- Purpose of Today's Meeting:
  - Fall Reopening
  - Safety protocols
  - NOT Independent Study
- Introductions
- Instructions:
  - Translations
  - How to ask questions?
- Question and Answers



# Are Schools returning to In-Person Instruction in the Fall?

## YES

- This fall, all students in Santa Clara County should be back in school with their teachers and their friends.
- Throughout the pandemic, our county has made decisions and recommendations by reviewing the latest available science and adapting it to the needs of our local community. The latest science demonstrates that in-person instruction is not only safe; it's the right thing to do.
- Numerous scientific studies have clearly shown that we have multiple tools in our toolbox to help keep children and educators safe.
  - We now know that the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among children wearing masks is very low.
  - This risk is even lower now that the Bay Area has some of the highest local vaccination rates in the world. Roughly 83% of people 12 and older in our county have gotten at least one dose, and more than 77% are fully vaccinated.



# Are Schools returning to In-Person Instruction in the Fall?

## YES

- The spread of the Delta variants and the latest decision to collect more data before making vaccines available to kids under 12 mean that we need to keep doing everything we can to protect the health of our community. But even given those factors, the benefits of in-person schooling clearly outweigh the risks at this point in the pandemic.
- Not only do we have more tools than before to reduce transmission, it is now clearer than ever that schools are more than just buildings.
  - Schools provide critical interpersonal interactions that shape kids and teens during important developmental years.
  - And they offer food and other services and resources that can be vital lifelines for families.

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# Are Schools returning to In-Person Instruction in the Fall?

## YES

- Health officials throughout California agree that it's time to return to full in-person instruction—for the good of students, teachers, parents, the school community and the community at large.
- We all have children we love in our lives and want to keep them safe. Right now, bringing children back to their schools is both a scientifically sound decision and the right thing to do.

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**MPESD Requirements and CDC/CDPH  
Guidance for Schools July 12, 2021**

# Is MPESD Requiring Masks?

## YES MPESD will Require Universal Masking

- All adults and students will be required to wear masks indoors and outdoors with exemptions **CDPH face mask guidance**.
  - **Adults in K-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.**
  - Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.
- **MPESD will provide masks for adults and students who forget or lose their mask while in school premises.**

# Is MPESD Requiring Masks?

## YES MPESD will Require Universal Masking

- CDPH will continue to assess conditions on an ongoing basis, and will determine no later than November 1, 2021, whether to update mask requirements or recommendations. **MPESD will do the same, it will review the CDPH's updates and determine if it needs to update the universal mask requirements.**
- This guidance is designed to enable all schools to offer and provide full in-person instruction to all students safely, consistent with the current scientific evidence about COVID-19, even if pandemic dynamics shift throughout the school year, affected by vaccination rates and the potential emergence of viral variants.

## Safer Activities for You and Your Family

- [If you are fully vaccinated](#), you can participate in many of the activities that you did before the pandemic.
- To maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area [of substantial or high transmission](#).
- Wearing a mask is most important if you have a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you are at [increased risk for severe disease](#), or if someone in your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated. If this applies to you or your household, you might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission in your area.
- You should continue to wear a mask where required by laws, rules, regulations, or local guidance.



## CDC updates Mask Guidance

# American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly endorses the use of safe and effective infection control procedures to protect children and adolescents. During the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, effective infection prevention and control requires the correct and consistent use of a [well-fitting face mask](#) for those who are not fully vaccinated. Face masks should fit over the mouth and nose and [fit snugly](#) along the side of the face without any gaps.

Face masks can be safely worn by all children 2 years of age and older, including the vast majority of children with underlying health conditions, with rare exception. Children 2 years of age and older have demonstrated their ability to wear a face mask. In addition to protecting the child, the use of face masks significantly reduces the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and other respiratory infections within schools and other community settings. Home use of face masks also may be particularly valuable in households that include medically fragile, immunocompromised, or at-risk adults and children.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, use of face masks should continue until the child or adolescent is considered [fully vaccinated](#) – two weeks after receipt of the final COVID-19 vaccine dose.

Pediatricians are encouraged to discuss infection control practices with their patients and families. [Read full text here.](#)

# What are the requirements for Physical distancing?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

### **Physical distancing**

Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. This is consistent with [CDC K-12 School Guidance](#).

**MPESD will try to implement the three foot physical distancing whenever possible, especially when masks need to be off such as eating or playing musical instruments.**

# What are the recommendations for ventilation?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

### **Ventilation recommendations**

For indoor spaces, ventilation should be optimized, which can be done by following [CDPH Guidance on Ventilation of Indoor Environments and Ventilation and Filtration to Reduce Long-Range Airborne Transmission of COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Infections: Considerations for Reopened Schools](#).

**All MPESD schools and classrooms meet or exceed ventilation and filtration recommendations.**

# What are the recommendations for eating at school?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

- **MPESD will use indoor and outdoor spaces as well as staggering lunches to maximize physical distance as much as possible while students are eating** (especially indoors). Using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating such as classrooms or the gymnasium can help facilitate distancing.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals.
- Given the very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.

# What are the handwashing recommendations?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

- **MPESD will follow the following recommendations from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH):**
- Hand hygiene recommendations
  - a. Teachers will reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff.
  - b. Promote hand washing throughout the day, especially before and after eating, after using the toilet, and after handling garbage, or removing gloves.
  - c. Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, no-touch trash cans, face coverings, and hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer.

# What are the recommendations for staying home sick and getting tested?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

**MPESD will continue with the daily self health screenings for students and staff.**

- Follow the strategy for Staying Home when Sick and Getting Tested from the [CDC](#).
- Getting tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are [consistent with COVID-19](#) will help with rapid contact tracing and prevent possible spread at schools.

# What are the recommendations for staying home when sick and getting tested?

- Advise staff members and students with symptoms of COVID-19 infection not to return for in-person instruction until they have met CDPH criteria to return to school for those with symptoms:
  - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and
  - Other symptoms have improved; and
  - They have a negative test for SARS-CoV-2, OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition (e.g., allergies or asthma) OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative named diagnosis (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus), OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

# What are the Screening testing and recommendations?

**Safety Measures for K-12 Schools:** Strongly recommend that unvaccinated students and staff be offered regular COVID-19 screening testing.

MPESD has partnered with California's Testing Task Force K-12 Schools Testing Program to do screening testing for staff. Testing can also be done with students with parent consent; we are exploring the details, more information to come. We will continue working with local agencies to do the following:

- Work with Bay Area Community Health to conduct COVID testing for the community
- Work with the County Health Department to do vaccinations on site for our community

# What are the recommendations for Screening & Testing?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

MPESD has partnered with California's Testing Task Force K-12 Schools Testing Program to do screening testing for staff. Testing can also be done with students with parent consent; we are exploring the details, more information to come. We will be working with local agencies to continue the following:

- Work with Bay Area Health to conduct COVID testing for the community
- Work with the County Health Department to do vaccinations on site for our community

# What are the recommendations for visitors?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

- Schools should limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas where there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission.
- Schools should not limit access for direct service providers, but can ensure compliance with school visitor policies.

MPESD will limit visitors at schools in the Fall. Families and community members will be encouraged to make appointments ahead of time. All visitors will be required to wear a mask on school grounds.

# What are the quarantine recommendations for vaccinated close contacts?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

- For those who are vaccinated, follow the [CDPH Fully Vaccinated People Guidance](#) regarding quarantine.
- Quarantine recommendations for unvaccinated students for exposures when both parties were wearing a mask, as required in K-12 indoor settings. These are adapted from the [CDC K-12 guidance](#) and [CDC definition of a close contact](#).

# What are the quarantine recommendations for vaccinated close contacts?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

- When both parties were wearing a mask in the indoor classroom setting, unvaccinated students who are close contacts (more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 0-6 feet indoors) may undergo a modified 10-day quarantine as follows. They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:
  - Are asymptomatic;
  - Continue to appropriately mask, as required;
  - Undergo at least twice weekly testing during the 10-day quarantine; and
  - Continue to quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting.

# What are the quarantine recommendations for unvaccinated close contacts who were not wearing masks or for whom the infected individual was not wearing a mask during the indoor exposure; or unvaccinated students?

## Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

- For these contacts, those who remain asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue self-quarantine under the following conditions:
  - Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR
  - Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.
  - To discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close contacts must:
    - Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND
    - Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wearing a mask when around others, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure.
    - If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care.

## ***With the new CDPH guidance, at what point might a classroom or school be directed to "shut down" for a certain period of time because of a COVID outbreak?***

According to Dr. Dewan, Superintendent from SCCOE,

- CDPH's guidance for K-12 schools for the 2021-2021 school year does not identify when a school or classroom should shut down for a period of time due to a COVID-19 outbreak.
- As a result of high vaccination rates for persons over 12 in Santa Clara County, we do not expect to see outbreaks of the number and size that we saw in previous surges during this pandemic.
- Even during peak periods of COVID-19 transmission earlier in this pandemic, there was limited to no need to shut down entire schools and/or programs. Almost all closures were initiated by the school/program, not at the direction of CDPH or the County's Public Health Department.
- Under CDPH's new guidance, students exposed to a case can continue attending school if they are asymptomatic and continue to follow masking requirements.

# Safety is our #1 priority. We are in this together!

- Universal masking - **indoor and outdoors** - regardless of vaccination status.
- **3-foot social distancing requirement whenever possible**; during lunch and special activities (music).
- Testing opportunities will be made available to students and staff.
- Daily screening survey at home to be completed by parents.
- Notify your school office if a student is showing symptoms or has tested positive.
- Will continue to implement Safety Best Practices - air filtration and circulation, sanitizing stations, regular disinfecting, hydration stations, individual school supplies for students.
- Staff will be receiving training on all safety protocols before the start of the new school year.