

**Sonora Elementary School District
830 Greenley Road
Sonora, Ca 95370**

**Health and Safety Plan during COVID-19 for a
Safe Return to School**

Updated January 20th, 2021

This document is subject to change by the School Superintendent following New
CDHP Guidelines

The course of COVID-19 pandemic has immensely changed our lives in so many ways. As the vaccine is being deployed in Tuolumne County, we must work together to mitigate the risk in our community, while still educating and supporting the health and well-being of our students.

With the CDHP guidelines that came out on January 14th, 2021, we are establishing new norms within our schools and office spaces - understanding it will take time and constant positive reinforcement to teach and learn these new ways of being. We urge our community to lean into this new normal and create a physically and emotionally safe space for everyone.

Physical distancing does not come naturally or easy. Maintaining physical distance violates so many of our social norms, especially for those we are closest with.

As we navigate our new normal, we must support each other in remaining humble and flexible. We continue to learn about COVID-19, and as the science changes our responses may need to change as well. We may find ourselves adopting new strategies or measures - and quickly having to revise our plans.

Flexibility is key as we try to contain the spread of COVID-19. As the CDC advises, there may be times when we need to return to remaining safer at home. In any situation, we will work together with our community, relying on our collective ingenuity and creativity to help us respond and address changes as needed.

All information contained in this Health and Safety Plan during COVID-19 for a Safe Return to School is taken from the California Department of Public Health's COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California 2020-2021 School Year, published on January 14th, 2021.

Public Health Recommendations

This plan was developed using recommendations from the California Department of Public Health, California Department of Education, and Tuolumne County Public Health.

Health Precautions for Students and Staff

How COVID-19 Spreads:

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person to person, including between people who are physically near each other (within about 6 feet). People who are infected but do not show symptoms can also spread the virus to others.

- People who are physically near (within 6 feet) a person with COVID-19 or have direct contact with that person are at greatest risk of infection.
- Infections occur mainly through exposure to respiratory droplets when a person is in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- When people with COVID-19 cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe they produce **respiratory droplets**. These droplets can range in size from larger droplets (some of which are visible) to smaller droplets. Small droplets can also form particles when they dry very quickly in the airstream.
- Respiratory droplets can also land on surfaces and objects. It is possible that a person could get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be a common way that COVID-19 spreads.

Personal Preventative Measures

To help prevent additional spread and to keep our schools open, our students and staff will be required to practice the following personal prevention measures:

- Physical distancing
- Hand hygiene
- Face coverings
- Cough/sneeze etiquette
- Active and passive screening

Mitigation Measures for Students and Staff

Health Screening:

Passive (Self) Screening: Staff must self-screen for symptoms at home daily. This is called passive screening. If a person is sick or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, they may not come to school and will follow Stay at Home Req'. Signs of illness include fever or chills (100.4 degrees or higher), cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea per *CDC guidelines*.

Active Screening - Temperature Checks and Procedures: Active screening requires all students entering a site or school bus to be screened for illness including a temperature check and review of signs and symptoms of illness. Any student with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or signs or symptoms of illness per Stay at Home Requirements shall return home. Students and staff approaching the entry must be wearing a 3-ply surgical mask or cloth face covering, unless exempted under CDHP criteria. Face coverings will be available in the main office for those who do not have their own.

Process for Daily Student Screening:

- Temperature checks will be done before students leave vehicles when at all possible. If this is not possible, students will wait in a line with appropriate physical distancing. Signage with reminders about distancing, masks, and hygiene will be posted.
- Students must wear a face covering.

Staff instructions for student screening:

- Take temperature.
- If the temperature is less than 100.4 degrees, the student reports no sign or symptoms of illness, and the student appears well, then direct the student to enter campus. If the student has any sign of illness and the parent is not present, send them to a designated isolation space to call the parent and return home. Main Office will provide the parent with the Stay at Home Req. information sheet.
- If SES main office staff is unable to reach the parent, the student must be isolated in the quarantine room until the parent can be reached.

Physical Distancing

Everyone must practice physical distancing.

Per the California Department of Public Health, this means keeping at least 6 feet from other people at all times, where practicable. Maintaining adequate space is one of the best tools available to avoid exposure to COVID-19 and slow its spread. Appropriate physical distancing can sometimes be difficult to maintain, such as when walking in a busy hallway or in large crowds, making required face coverings even more vital.

Face Coverings

Wearing face coverings.

Wearing a face covering prevents a person from spreading respiratory droplets while talking, singing, breathing, or coughing. They are primarily meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected (*many people carry COVID-19 but do not have symptoms*). 3-ply surgical masks or cloth face coverings must be worn to cover the entire mouth and nose at all times. Per the California Department of Public Health:

- 3-ply surgical masks or cloth face coverings are required to be worn by all staff members.
- 3-ply surgical masks or cloth face coverings are required for all students in grades TK-12.

3 Ply Mask or Cloth face coverings protect our community from the spread of COVID-19:

Wearing a 3-ply surgical mask or cloth face covering is required for all SEDS staff, students, parents/guardians and visitors unless it is not recommended by a physician per the Department of Public Health.

3-ply surgical masks or cloth face coverings must be worn by staff and students at all times including:

- While entering or exiting school grounds or district spaces
- While on school grounds
- While on a school bus
- Engaged in work, whether at the workplace or performing work off-site, when:
 - Interacting in-person with any member of the public;
 - Working in any space visited by members of the public, regardless of whether anyone from the public is present at the time.
- Students refusing to wear face coverings will be excluded from in-person attendance in the in-person instruction model and assigned to distance learning.

Face Shields:

- In limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (e.g., communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield with a drape (per CDPH guidelines) can be used instead of a face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.
- Workers or other persons handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to face coverings.

Guidance for daily use of face coverings:

- Must be worn to cover the entire mouth and nose at all times.
- Use a freshly washed or clean face covering for each on-site visit.
- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the face covering.
- If you are not already wearing it, put on your face covering before coming onto school grounds.

How to remove a face covering:

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before touching the face covering. Avoid touching the front of the covering, which may be contaminated.
- Only handle the face covering by the ties, bands or loops.
- Throw any disposable face covering in a waste container.
- Wash your cloth face covering by hand with warm water and soap or in the washing machine.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.

Students or staff with a doctor's written exemption are exempt from wearing a face covering in the following situations:

- For those with hearing impairments, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see their mouth is essential for communication. Only face shields with a drape would be required in this situation.
- Persons who are eating or drinking, provided that they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet away from persons who are not members of the same household or residence. However, most importantly, masks must be worn again as soon as the student finishes eating.

- Participants in youth and adult sports must wear face coverings when participating in the activity, even with heavy exertion as tolerated, both indoors and outdoors.
- The face covering CDHP guidance recognizes that there are some people who cannot wear a face covering for a number of different reasons. People are exempted from the requirement if (A) they are under age 2, (B) have a medical or mental health condition or disability that would impede them from properly wearing or handling a face covering, (C) those with a communication disability. Those with communication disabilities can consider wearing a face shield with a drape.
- Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, as confirmed by a doctor and approved by the Superintendent, must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge.

Practice Hand Hygiene

Wash or Sanitize Hands Frequently

All students and staff must wash hands frequently. If soap and water are not available use district approved greater than 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer. The following guidelines are recommended for school settings. At minimum, students and staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer:

- Upon arrival to the school site
- Before lunch
- Upon entry to any new classroom or offices
- When using the restroom
- When visibly dirty
- After using a tissue, coughing into hands

Use Respiratory Hygiene

Once a tissue is used, throw it away in a waste container and then wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer. Do not touch the face. Reinforce respiratory hygiene or cough/sneeze etiquette, including use of tissues and elbows by using signage and/or training.

Mitigation Standards for SESD Sites

Ventilation and Air Flow (ask David)

- Sites will replace all HVAC filters 3 times per year (July, November, and March) as is the standard practice. MERV 13 filters will be used during COVID-19.
- Keep windows and doors open, if possible, to increase airflow.

Entrances & Exits (Pick-Up & Drop-Off)

SESD will take every measure to minimize crowding at drop-off and pick-up times:

- Maximize space between students and between students and the driver on school buses and open windows to the greatest extent practicable. Two windows on a bus should be opened fully or half way.
- As practicable, minimize contact at school between students and staff at the beginning and end of the school day. Prioritize minimizing contact between adults at all times, when practicable.
- Ensure each school bus is equipped with extra unused face coverings for students who may have inadvertently failed to bring one.

Designated “Quarantine Room”

- Ensure good ventilation.
- Ensure the following supplies are available: hand sanitizer, face coverings, disinfectant, thermometer, trash can with liner.
- Room must be disinfected daily, if they were used.
- If more than one individual is sick, maintain as much physical distance and ventilation as possible.

Classrooms

Sanitizer will be provided in every classroom.

Under no circumstances should distance between student chairs be less than 4 feet. If 6 feet of distance is not possible, it is recommended, by CDHP, to optimize ventilation and consider using other separation techniques as partitions between students or desks, or arranging desks in a way that minimizes face to face contact.

- Short-term exposures of less than 6 feet between students and staff are permitted (e.g., a teacher assisting a student one-on-one), but the duration should be minimized and masks must be worn.
- Consider redesigning activities for smaller groups and rearranging furniture, or removing furniture, and play spaces to maintain separation.
- Staff should develop instructions for maximizing spacing and ways to minimize movement in both indoor and outdoor spaces that are easy for students to understand and are developmentally appropriate.

- Prioritize the use and maximization of outdoor space for activities where possible.
- Activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled aerosols such as band and choir practice and performances are permitted outdoors only, provided that precautions such as physical distancing and use of face coverings are implemented to the maximum extent.
- Consider using cleanable privacy boards or clear screens to increase and enforce separation between staff and students.

Common areas

- Evaluate areas such as yards, amphitheater, library, cafeteria, playground, and make modifications to encourage social distancing.
- Drinking fountains should be closed
- Encourage the use of reusable water bottles for students to use throughout the day.

Support areas

- Provide access to hand washing stations or hand sanitizer.
- Post clear signage for hygiene and distancing.

Bathrooms

- Ensure all bathrooms have soap, paper towels, and trash cans.
- Assigned custodians shall disinfect sink handles, toilet handle, and door handle in staff bathroom daily.
- Post clear signage for hygiene and distancing.
- Avoid taking large groups to the bathrooms at once (e.g., avoid having all classes use the bathroom right after lunch or recess).

Hallways

- Post signage that encouraging face coverings and social distancing.

Recess/yards and Play Spaces

- Maintain grade level groups in one specific assigned location.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after recess.
- Maintain at least 6 feet of space from other children as much as possible, as practicable.
- Serve meals outdoors or in classrooms instead of cafeterias where practicable.

PE Classes/Athletics

- Physical education (PE) and athletics should be limited to activities that do not involve physical contact with other students.

School Bus/Transportation

All Personal Hygiene Requirements must be followed on the school bus. For active screening, the driver or bus aide must screen each rider, for symptoms before boarding the bus.

Maximize space between students and between students and the driver on school buses and open windows to the greatest extent practicable. Two windows on a bus should be opened fully and half-way.

If a student's temperature is over 100.4 degrees or the student is symptomatic, parents will be asked to take the student home, or the driver will send the home and the main office will notify the parents ASAP, and follow Stay at Home Requirements

- All riders must wear a 3-ply surgical mask or cloth face covering while waiting for the bus and while riding the bus.
- Each rider must use hand sanitizer before entering the bus.
- Students from the same household may sit in the same seat.
- Mark or block seats that must be left vacant.
- Ensure good ventilation with open/partially open windows. Min. of two windows should be open at all times.
- Prevent students from walking past each other by taking the following measures:
 - Seat students from the rear of the bus forward in the morning.
- Buses should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily and after transporting any individual who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- Bus drivers should be provided disinfectant and disposable gloves to support disinfection of frequently touched surfaces during the day.

Proper Disinfecting Procedures

Where highly needed, regularly disinfect high-touch areas throughout the day.

Frequently touched surfaces in the school include, but are not limited to:

- Door handles
- Light switches
- Sink handles
- Bathroom surfaces
- Student Desks
- Chairs

Inventory Controls

- Order supplies for start and plan for inventory management:

- 3 ply face coverings or cloth covering — for students and staff, individuals are encouraged to use their own 3 ply face coverings or cloth covering.
- Disposable masks for any student or staff member that needs one will be available in the main office.
- Hand sanitizer — in every room, used by every individual entering.
- Spray bottles disinfectant and paper towels can be available in every room to clean surfaces
- Gloves, masks and thermometers for use in care of sick or injured individuals
- Back stock of PPEs
- Proper ordering procedures from main office to ensure sufficient PPEs
- Use of district-approved products only

Communicable Disease Response Protocols

Communicable Disease Response protocols will help the district quickly identify communicable diseases, prevent the spread within the SESD community, and reduce potential harm. The response plan is contingent upon the type of disease and direction from Tuolumne County Public Health.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, the district will follow the enhanced preventative measures and heightened surveillance as detailed in this plan and directed by the state and county health departments. Protocols and procedures may change depending on the public health situation and the decisions and direction of public health leadership.

Responsibilities of School Site Staff

1. Sites must prepare for when someone gets sick. Individuals who have symptoms of illness must be immediately separated to prevent possible transmission of disease to others. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility depending on the severity of their symptoms. **Sick students and sick staff must:**
 - a. Be quickly separated from other students/staff until picked up by parent/guardian
 - b. Maintain more than 6 feet of distance from others, preferably in a separate room that is well ventilated
 - c. Wear a disposable mask
 - d. Attending staff must use standard precautions when assisting a sick individual. For suspected COVID-19 this includes, disposable face mask, eye covering/face shield and gloves
 - e. Call parent/guardian for immediate pick up

- i. Provide parent/guardian or staff member with stay at home requirement.
 - f. Disinfect all surfaces after the student/staff leaves and before use by others
 - g. If COVID-19 is suspected, contact your Site Principal or Human Resources. Follow Communicable Disease Response Protocols for notifying Human Resources for possible outbreaks of infectious disease
2. Collect and track illness-related absence information at the time of student or staff absence.
 - a. Train Covid-19 Tracing Team to support contract tracing as directed by the Tuolumne County Health Department
 3. Follow HIPAA confidentiality laws noting that communicable disease concerns are confidential, and all staff are expected to protect health information.
 4. Human Resources will report all COVID-19 diagnoses, as well as any unusually high number of illness-related student and staff absences, to Tuolumne County Public Health.
 5. Require students and staff to remain home per Stay at Home Requirements.
 - a. *Stay home if experiencing the following symptoms of illness: fever or chills (100.4 degrees or higher), cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. * Subject to change as revised by CDC.*
 - b. Stay home if and only if advised to isolate or quarantine by your doctor, the health department, Site Principal, due to COVID-19 precautions. Reasons may include:
 - i. Recent contact with a person with COVID-19
 - ii. Pending COVID-19 results
 - c. School Administration and/ or the health department will determine stay at home, isolation, or quarantine lengths on a case by case basis – including return to school or work when free of symptoms for 24 hours, and at least 10 days from the start of symptoms, and/or after the ordered quarantine/isolation period has ended, as applicable.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Human Resources Department

1. Human Resources will work to verify any reported concern, including speaking directly to families and/or staff when appropriate.
2. Tuolumne County Public Health and SESD will coordinate response to COVID-19 cases within the confidentiality framework of HIPPA and FERPA. The Site Principal will be the point of contact for all student related cases.
3. Human Resources will provide documentation should a staff member or student be required to quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure.
4. Human Resources and Site Principal will inform the Superintendent of any confirmed cases or confirmed exposures.
5. Human Resources and/or Superintendent will update school site administrator regarding the guidance received from Tuolumne County Public Health.
6. The one or more established communication channels listed below will be used depending on level of exposure and public health recommendations.
 - a. Parent Letters (printed, email, SMS, phone)
 - b. School and District Website
 - c. School and District School Messenger
 - d. All call

Notification of a Confirmed Case of COVID-19

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has designated COVID-19 as a reportable communicable disease. Therefore, in the event a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the Tuolumne Public Health Department will be in contact with the student's parent/guardian or the staff member. Tuolumne Public Health will issue directions and recommendations to the patient. Tuolumne County Public Health will also coordinate response to COVID-19 cases with SESD within the confidentiality framework of HIPPA and FERPA.
- If a student or staff member notifies school or district staff that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19, staff must immediately contact the Site Principal and Human Resources.
- Human Resources staff will verify all reported information with the patient and Tuolumne County Public Health, following all guidance or directives provided by Tuolumne County Public Health.

Notification of a Confirmed Exposure of COVID-19

A contact is a person who has been exposed to a person who tested positive for

COVID-19. Contacts are notified by the county health department and given instructions for quarantine and return to work/school guidelines. Currently, Tuolumne County Public Health defines a contact as someone who has been within 6 feet or less of distance for at least 15 minutes.

- Note that quarantine guidelines only apply to those who have had recent close contact with an individual infected with COVID-19. Contacts of asymptomatic quarantined individuals (contacts of asymptomatic contacts) do not need to stay home from school.

School Closure Protocols

What are the criteria for closing a school to in-person learning?

Individual school closure, in which all students and staff are not on campus, is recommended based on the number of cases and stable groups impacted, which suggest that active in-school transmission is occurring.

Closure should be done in consultation with the PHO. Situations that may indicate the need for school closure:

- Within a 14-day period, an outbreak has occurred in 25% or more stable groups in the school.
- Within a 14-day period, at least three outbreaks have occurred in the school AND more than 5% of the school population is infected.
- The PHO may also determine school closure is warranted for other reasons, including results from public health investigation or other local epidemiological data.

Length of closure: 14 days, or according to a decision made in consultation with the PHO. The State Safe Schools for All Technical Assistance teams (TA teams), comprised of experts across multiple state agencies, will be available to assist schools with disease investigation for those with outbreaks that cannot find resources to investigate the outbreaks. The TA teams will also be available to help schools that close in order to identify and address any remediable safety issues.

If a school is closed, when may it reopen? Schools may typically reopen after 14 days and if the following have occurred:

- Cleaning and disinfection
- Public health investigation
- Consultation with the LHD

What are the criteria for closing a LEA?

A school district should close if 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19 within a 14-day period and in consultation with the LHD.

If a LEA is closed, when may it reopen?

LEAs may typically reopen after 14 days, in consultation with the LHD

These roles and responsibilities must be widely shared with responsible staff during the pandemic:

Administrator Checklist:

- Follow all individual health precautions for students and staff
- Personal prevention practices, such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, cloth face coverings and cough/sneeze etiquette are important principles to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (CDC)
- Actively model and support all required public health measures.
- When needed per CDHP guidelines or Health Department, make changes to site physical spaces and/or implement policies to enforce mitigation measures.
- Provide frequent communication about COVID-19 and cold/flu prevention efforts for students and staff, when practicable.
- Contact Human Resources immediately if: A staff is diagnosed with, is suspected of having, or has been exposed to COVID-19 or other reportable communicable disease
- Reinforce Stay at Home Requirements by sending home any students or staff who have signs or symptoms of illness.

Teacher Checklist:

- Follow all individual health precautions for students and staff
- Personal prevention practices, such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, cloth face coverings and cough/sneeze etiquette are important principles to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (CDC)
- Actively model and support all required public health measures.
- Reinforce and follow health precautions with your students
- Physical distancing at all times — at least 6 feet, where practicable.
- Ensure compliance with maximum occupancy of individuals in each classroom.
- Desks must face in the same direction.
- Establish regular times for hand washing/hand sanitizer
- Proper handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent illness
- Open doors and windows when possible. Maximize ventilation through the room.
- Ensure all students will not sharing of food.
Store personal items backpack/jacket/lunch bag at the student desk.
- Send any visibly sick students or students who say they do not feel well to the office: i.e. student has symptoms such as unusual fatigue, coughing, sneezing, runny nose, vomiting, diarrhea, appears to have a fever/flushed cheek, diaphoretic without exercise, red/crus

Bus Drivers/Transportation Checklist:

- Follow all individual health precautions for students and staff
- Personal prevention practices, such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, cloth face coverings and cough/sneeze etiquette are important principles to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (CDC)
- Actively model and support all required public health measures.
- Students from the same household may sit in the same seat without physical distancing.
- Reinforce with parent and students steps they must take to keep students and staff safe during loading and unloading
- For active screening, the driver must screen each rider for symptoms before boarding the bus.
- All riders must wear cloth face covering while waiting for the bus and on the bus, unless contraindicated.
- Each rider must use hand sanitizer before entering the bus.
- Ensure good ventilation with open/partially open 2 windows.
- Buses should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily and after transporting any individual who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19

Support Staff Checklist:

- Follow all individual health precautions for students and staff,
- Personal prevention practices, such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, cloth face coverings and cough/sneeze etiquette are important principles to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (CDC)
- Actively model and support all required public health measures.
- Look for visible signs of illness in students. Refer visibly sick students and staff to the office.

Operations/Custodial Staff Checklist:

- Follow all individual health precautions for students and staff
- Personal prevention practices, such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, cloth face coverings and cough/sneeze etiquette are important principles to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (CDC)
- Actively model and support all required public health measures.
- Ensure school has adequate supplies of handwashing materials, facial tissues,

district-approved disinfecting cleaner, etc.

- Maintain a stock of cleaning materials and personal protective equipment to ensure readiness - order additional supplies as needed.
- Routine disinfecting: On a daily basis, disinfect all common spaces and classroom areas.
- High-touch areas and areas where sick students or staff were present should be disinfected.
- Follow all established district protocols for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Contact Maintenance and Operations if a large-scale deep disinfecting/cleaning is required

Food Service Staff Checklist:

- Follow all individual health precautions for students and staff
- Deliver breakfasts and lunches in the classrooms
- Personal prevention practices, such as physical distancing, hand hygiene, cloth face coverings and cough/sneeze etiquette are important principles to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (CDC)
- Actively model and support all required public health measures.
- Follow all Nutrition Services Disinfectant protocols and procedures.
- Ensure your space has the following supplies – hand sanitizer, facial tissue, garbage cans with liners (changed daily), disinfectant wipes or spray, paper towels, gloves and face coverings.