

SONOMA COUNTY
2020-2021

ROADMAP TO A SAFE REOPENING

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SONOMA COUNTY SCHOOLS
TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19

A collaborative document by:
The Sonoma County Office of Education
and the School/Health Reopening Committee

JUNE 2020

Based on guidance from: Sonoma County Department of Health Services, Centers for Disease Control, California Department of Public Health, California Department of Education



SONOMA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION & SONOMA COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
JOINT STATEMENT ON SCHOOL REOPENING GUIDELINES

June 24, 2020

On Wednesday, June 24, Sonoma County Superintendent Dr. Steve Herrington met with Sonoma County Health Officer Dr. Sundari Mase, Sonoma County Director of Health Services Barbie Robinson, and Deputy County Counsel Adam Radtke, to further discuss the school reopening guidelines, Roadmap to a Safe Reopening, based on the ever-changing conditions and state guidance around COVID-19.

Specifically, they met to discuss:

1. The impact of a new state requirement that all Californians over age two must wear a mask in most public settings, including schools, and
2. What conditions need to be in place before the health officer believes that it would be considered safe for schools to consider reducing the distance between students from six feet to an amount that would accommodate more students. For instance, a four-foot distancing standard allows for larger class cohorts that would enable many schools to have children come back five days per week rather than on a hybrid schedule.

Dr. Mase and Dr. Herrington shared a common desire to take an evidence-based, health-first approach to reopening schools, while also supporting working families and students with special needs for whom a hybrid model of learning will be very challenging.

They agreed to continue with the county's evidence-based approach by maintaining a six-foot distancing standard at the beginning of the school year. After about a month of school being back in session, the health officer and the county superintendent will reconvene to look at the data and see whether a more permissive student distancing standard is supported by the data.

The data they will be considering will include:

- Overall community spread
- The number of cases/outbreaks in schools
- The impact of children potentially needing to be exposed to a second "cohort" in after-school programs
- The effectiveness of the hybrid learning model, and the impact on working parents

If the data supports moving to a student distancing standard of less than six feet, after school is in session for a month, then schools would be allowed to do so. The county and schools would then assess the impacts of a lesser distancing standard before eventually returning to a full reopening with no distancing requirements.

Regarding the state's mask requirement, we understand that the issue is still being discussed at the state level, and additional guidance for schools is expected to be provided soon. **Dr. Herrington and Dr. Mase agreed that they will wait to see the final guidance from the state before amending the current Sonoma County school reopening guidelines.**

Following this conversation, and in order to be prepared in this ever-changing environment, **we advise districts to prepare for a range of scenarios**, including a six-foot distancing model for opening, a four-foot model for transitioning, a model with no distancing requirements, and an all-distance-learning model in the event that we see another spike of the virus within the county. We know that this is a heavy lift, and SCOE will continue to support districts in their efforts to create a safe environment for school, staff, and students.

We continue to encourage schools to offer distance learning options for students and teachers with health or other concerns related to school reopening.

This collaborative effort by Dr. Herrington and Dr. Mase continues to support and build on the guiding principles that serve as the foundation of the Roadmap to A Safe Reopening. Those principles are:

- Protect student, staff, and community health
- Foster student learning and progress
- Maintain positive learning environments
- Foster student emotional health
- Care for our most vulnerable populations

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INTRODUCTION

Schools are critical to a healthy, productive, well-functioning society, as well as a strong economy. Schools educate our children, feed them, teach them how to participate in society, and provide them a safe place to live and learn while their parents or guardians are at work. Closing school campuses to help flatten the curve of COVID-19 was a necessary step in the spring of 2020, but educators and families alike recognize the need to resume in-person learning as soon as it is safe and feasible to do so. We acknowledge that distance learning, while sometimes necessary during the fight against COVID-19, is not the best option for all children, including young children, those with special needs, those with working parents, and those who may not have a safe home environment. At the same time, as schools seek to reopen their campuses, student and staff health and safety must be the highest priority. This document seeks to provide a road map to guide schools in planning for a safe reopening of school in the fall of 2020.

The following guidelines and considerations are intended to help school and community leaders plan and prepare to resume in-person instruction. They are based on the best available public health data at this time, international best practices, and the practical realities of managing school operations. The information found here is adapted from guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) California Department of Public Health, and California Department of Education (CDE), in collaboration with the Sonoma County school/health planning committee consisting of regional school district superintendents. It was developed in collaboration with and reviewed by the Sonoma County Health Officer. The current guidance is based on direction provided in the existing Sonoma County Public Health Order (C19-14). As conditions and health orders change, so will this guidance.

Implementation will depend on local public health conditions, including those listed here. Communities meeting those criteria, such as lower incidence of COVID-19, capacity for contact tracing, and adequate preparedness, may implement this guidance as part of a phased reopening.

Implementation of this guidance should be tailored for each setting, including adequate consideration of instructional programs operating at each school site and the needs of students and families. School leaders should consider the following:

- **Student, Family and Staff Population:** Who are the student, family and staff populations that will be impacted by or can serve as partners in implementing any of the following measures?
- **Ability to Implement or Adhere to Measures:** Do staff, students and families have the tools, information, resources and ability to successfully adhere to or implement the new measures?
- **Negative or Unintended Consequences:** Are there any negative or unintended consequences to staff, students, or families of implementing the measures and how can those consequences be mitigated?

Each school district will be dealing with their own circumstances in creating a customized plan that fits the needs of their community. However, it is important that we all work together to ensure that these guiding principles are at the heart of every school reopening:

- Protect student, staff, and community health
- Foster student learning and progress
- Maintain positive learning environments
- Foster student emotional health
- Care for our most vulnerable populations

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The information and guidance found here is adapted from guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), California Department of Public Health, and California Department of Education (CDE), in collaboration with the Sonoma County school/health planning committee consisting of regional school district superintendents. The current guidance is based on direction provided in the existing Sonoma County Public Health Order (C19-14.)

School/Health Planning Committee:

- Barbara Bickford, Ed.D., Twin Hills School District (West County)
- Gary Callahan, Petaluma City Schools (South County)
- Jeremy Decker, Cloverdale Unified School District (North County)
- Diann Kitamura, Ed.D., Santa Rosa City Schools (Central/East County)
- Dana Pedersen, Guerneville School District (Small Districts)
- Steve Herrington, Ph.D., Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools (Coordinates with districts)
- Sundari Mase, M.D., Sonoma County Health Officer
- Adam Radtke, County Counsel

Source/Guiding Documents:

- [Sonoma County Public Health Order \(C19-14\)](#)
- [California Department of Public Health: Industry Guidance for Schools and School-based Programs](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control: Interim Guidance for Schools](#)
- [California Department of Education: Stronger Together: A guidebook for the safe reopening of California's public schools](#)

Instructional Support and Guidance from subject-matter experts in SCOE's Educational Support Services and Special Education departments

- **SCOE Special Education Department**
 - Mandy Corbin - Assistant Superintendent
 - Leslie Edmonds - Teacher of the Visually Impaired
 - Susan Oliver - Audiologist/Admin Specialist for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Department

*Special Education guidance was also built on guidance from the Los Angeles County Office of Education
- **Educational Support Services Department**
 - Jennie Snyder, Ed.D. - Deputy Superintendent
 - Brulene Zanutto - Coordinator of Early Literacy and School Readiness
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 - Aracely Romo-Flores - Director: Continuous Improvement
 - Jennifer Guerrero - EL Coordinator
 - Debra Sander - Foster Youth Services Coordinator
 - Kelly Matteri - Coordinator of ELA/HSS/UDL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following guidance is shared for implementation during **CA Stage 3** of the COVID-19 pandemic as much as is reasonable and practical. Flexibility is provided as necessary to maintain balance between a safe learning environment and effective teaching practices.

Schools are expected to make a concerted effort to adhere to all state and county health orders as much as practical.

Based on current social distancing standards from the CA Department of Public Health, a separation of six feet between students is recommended for ensuring safe health conditions for students and staff.

However, it is recognized that teachers/school staff will sometimes need to interact more closely with students for numerous reasons. When doing so, the educator may take steps to mitigate the risk by wearing a face mask, avoiding close face to face interaction, and minimizing the length of the interaction (less than 15 minutes).

Additionally, children, especially young children, may sometimes move closer than the recommended six-foot distance. This is a natural part of child development and interaction. The educator is encouraged to redirect children as needed and remind them to maintain some physical distance.

Face coverings should be worn by staff and students (particularly students older than 12) as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Masks are not required for students age 12 or younger, but are recommended as much as practical.

WHAT FAMILIES CAN EXPECT: FAQs

Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) is partnering closely with the Sonoma County Department of Health Services to ensure that schools reopen as safely as possible in the fall. For the most up-to-date information, please visit scoe.org/covid.

Q: Who makes the guidelines that schools need to follow in the fall?

A: School districts are bound by state and county health orders. Beyond this, they are free to develop their own operations and safety plan to best serve the needs of their community based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, California Department of Public Health, and California Department of Education. This “Roadmap to a Safe Reopening” guidance document is not a mandate, but rather a series of recommendations and best practices that are aligned with the current public health order.

Q: What if I do not feel comfortable/safe sending my child back to school in the fall?

A: We recognize the concern that many parents feel. School districts are strongly encouraged to provide options to meet the needs of every family, including distance learning, a hybrid model, and in-person classes.

Q: Will full-time in-person classes be available for working parents, especially first responders?

A: Every school district is working toward this goal. However, some school districts may be able to provide full-time, in-person classes before others as a result of having more classroom space, greater funding, etc. Districts are also looking for creative solutions, such as partnering with parks or other childcare agencies.

Q: Will my child have to wear a mask all day? How will teachers address the social/emotional impacts of this?

A: The current health order provides flexibility for children 12 and under with masks. They are recommended but not required for this age group. As well, children with an underlying health condition are exempt. Masks are most important when other social distancing measures cannot be in place. While students will likely need to wear masks at least some of the time, schools will be working hard to provide additional social-emotional supports to children to address these concerns.

Q: How will these rules impact sports? Who decides what sports will be allowed?

A: Schools are encouraged to refer to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance regarding Considerations for Youth Sports. As well, schools will conform to all California Department of Education (CDE) and California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) sports restrictions and game/team safety and hygiene protocols. At this time, contact sports are considered high-risk and are restricted.

Q: Since California is expected to cut educational funding due, what is your plan for implementing safety measures if students are to return to the classroom?

A: We are hoping that the national HEROES Act and state legislature will provide additional funding in the weeks ahead so that schools will have the resources they need to reopen safely. As well, the state has promised to provide personal protective equipment (PPE). Schools will need this additional funding and PPE to reopen safely.

Q: How can teachers help my young child feel comfortable given social distancing requirements?

A: This is a challenge of our current moment, one that we believe teachers and schools will work hard to address. These guidelines acknowledge the reality that teachers and students will need to interact

more closely than six feet at times, and builds in flexibility in this regard. It is most important for teachers/students to be keep interactions brief when they must be closer than six feet, and two wear a mask.

Q: Why are all these precautions necessary when children rarely get seriously ill from COVID-19?

A: While children do not appear to be as susceptible to this illness as older individuals, they can spread the illness to older family members or school employees. Sonoma County schools serve nearly 70,000 students and 8,000 school employees and therefore play an important role in helping to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our overall community.



Planning and Health Considerations

GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN WORKING WITH COVID-19

The more people a student or staff member interacts with, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in school settings as follows:

- **Lowest Risk:** Students and teachers engage in virtual-only classes, activities, and events.
- **More Risk:** Small, in-person classes, activities, and events. Groups of students stay together and with the same teacher throughout/across school days and groups do not mix. Students remain at least six feet apart and do not share objects (e.g., hybrid virtual and in-person class structures, or staggered/rotated scheduling to accommodate smaller class sizes).
- **Highest Risk:** Full sized, in-person classes, activities, and events. Students are not spaced apart, share classroom materials or supplies, and mix between classes and activities.

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as [handwashing](#), [staying home when sick](#)) and environmental [cleaning and disinfection](#) are important principles that are covered in this document. Fortunately, there are a number of actions school administrators can take to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread during school sessions and activities.

Remember that all school events and activities are subject to the public gathering restrictions established by the state and county.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Providing regular, transparent, two-way communication within the school community is critical to building and maintaining trust during these stressful times.

Develop a communications plan to ensure that you are providing regular updates to your school community. An effective communications plan will:

- Understand and use the communications methods preferred by the target audience.
- Include other languages as needed.
- Provide alternatives to written communications, such as video PSAs, phone calls, or in-person conversation.
- Use communication that will accommodate persons with hearing and visual impairments.
- Develop frequent messaging that includes all critical information to reduce confusion, anxiety, or misunderstanding.
- Ensure that communication does not stigmatize or perpetuate stereotypes.
- Provide a method for families/stakeholders to give feedback.
- Consider developing a dedicated web page where you can provide updates to your community.
- Ensure consistency of messaging by sharing internal talking points with frontline staff.

Communications leading up to the start of the school year should address district operations, school schedules, the steps the district is taking to ensure health and safety, and the importance of safety measures like hand-washing and wearing masks. It should also clearly outline processes for pick-up/drop-off, parent visits, and other areas where logistics may have changed.

The district should also continue to collaborate with local health officials, county agencies, community nonprofits, and other stakeholders to ensure that district operations reflect current recommendations and best practices for keeping students, staff, and visitors safe during COVID-19.

The district should foster community engagement by actively including students, families, and staff in the decision-making process and providing them a voice. Strategies for community engagement include:

- Surveys
- Focus groups and listening sessions (these can be held virtually)
- Previews of draft plans with representative stakeholders to solicit real-time feedback
- Development of task forces and steering committees that include representatives from each stakeholder group

PROMOTING BEHAVIORS THAT REDUCE SPREAD

Schools may consider implementing several strategies to encourage behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19.

- **Stay home when appropriate**
- **Educate staff and families about when their child(ren) should stay home and when they can return to school**
 - Actively encourage employees and students who are sick or who have recently had [close contact](#) (longer than 15 minutes) with a person with COVID-19 to stay home, including when a member of a student's household has been sick with COVID-19. Develop policies that encourage sick employees and students to stay at home without fear of reprisal, and ensure employees, students, and students' families are aware of these policies. Consider not having perfect attendance awards, not assessing schools based on absenteeism, and offering virtual learning and telework options, if feasible.
 - [Staff and students should stay home](#) if they or a member of their household have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 [symptoms](#).
 - Staff and students who have recently had [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 should also [stay home and monitor their health](#).
- **CDC's criteria can help inform when employees should return to work**
 - Click here for criteria: [If they have been sick with COVID-19](#)
 - Click here for criteria: [If they have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19](#)
- **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
 - Teach and reinforce [handwashing](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students and staff.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer). Children under age 9 should use hand sanitizer under adult supervision. Call Poison Control if consumed (800-222-1222).
 - Encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- **Cloth Face Coverings**

Face coverings serve two purposes: 1) To limit large respiratory droplets from spreading, and 2) to prevent the user from touching their face, especially their nose and mouth.

 - Teach and reinforce use of [cloth face coverings](#) in compliance with the current county health order. Currently, the health order requires that adults and children older than age 12 wear a mask in an indoor setting. Masks are *recommended but not required* for children under 12.
 - Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students

(particularly older students) as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.

- Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to [wash their hands](#) frequently. Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on [proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings](#).
 - NOTE: [Cloth face coverings](#) should not be placed on:
 - Children younger than 2 years old
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
 - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance
- Any child aged two years or less must not wear a face covering because of the risk of suffocation. The Sonoma County Health Order does not require that any child aged 12 years or less wear a face covering. Parents and caregivers must supervise use of face coverings by children to avoid misuse.
- Students older than age 12 should wear a mask unless an underlying health conditions prevents it.
- [Cloth face coverings](#) are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. [Cloth face coverings](#) are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment.
- The Sonoma County Health Order exempts people from wearing face coverings if they endanger the health or safety of the individual.
- Per California Department of Public Health guidelines, school staff should wear face coverings unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection. Teachers can use face shields, if available, which enable younger students to see their teachers' faces and avoid potential barriers to phonological instruction. However, plastic face shields may not offer as effective protection as a mask. Individuals wearing a face shield should take additional precautions, such as maintaining six feet or more of social distancing.
- **Adequate Supplies**
 - Support [healthy hygiene](#) behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible) and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.
- **Signs and Messages**
 - Post [signs](#) in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that [promote everyday protective measures](#) and describe how to [stop the spread](#) of germs (such as by [properly washing hands](#) and [properly wearing a cloth face covering](#)). Schools with second language populations greater than 15% need to comply with federal second language postings.
 - Broadcast regular [announcements](#) on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems.
 - Include messages (for example, [videos](#)) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and on school [social media accounts](#)).
 - Find free CDC print and digital resources on CDC's [communications resources](#) main page.
 - Ensure that messages are designed to reach all target groups, including providing messages in multiple languages and in written and spoken formats.
 - Consider lesson plans to help children understand the reason behind the safety precautions, as well as how to comply with them.

MAINTAINING HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Schools may consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy environments.

- **Cleaning and Disinfection**

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school and on school buses at least daily or between use as much as possible. Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or cleaned between use.
- When choosing cleaning products, use those approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved list “N”](#) and follow product instructions.
- Classified staff engaged in cleaning and disinfecting should be equipped with proper PPE for COVID-19 disinfection (disposable gown, gloves, eye protection, and mask or respirator) in addition to PPE as required by product instructions.
- If transport vehicles (e.g., buses) are used by the school, drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other staff (e.g., hand hygiene, cloth face coverings). To clean and disinfect school buses or other transport vehicles, see guidance for [bus transit operators](#).
- Develop a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning and disinfection products](#) securely away from children. Use products that meet [EPA disinfection criteria](#), including storing products.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children or themselves from inhaling toxic fumes

- **Shared Objects**

- Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
- Keep each child’s belongings separated from others’ and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student their own art supplies, equipment) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.

- **Ventilation**

- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility.
- Ensure that HVAC filters are on a regular cleaning and replacement cycle.

- **Water Systems**

- To minimize the risk of [Legionnaire’s disease](#) and other diseases associated with water, [take steps](#) to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown. Drinking fountains should be cleaned and sanitized, but encourage staff and students to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains.

- **Modified Layouts**

- Make a good faith effort to space seating/desks at least six feet apart. Based on current social distancing standards from the CA Department of Public Health, a separation of

six feet between students is recommended for ensuring student/staff safety and health, particularly for the purpose of setting up a classroom and establishing spacing between student desks/learning environments. This will likely reduce classroom capacity.

- When six feet cannot be consistently guaranteed, consider ways to establish separation of students through other means if practical, such as, partitions between desks, markings on classroom floors to promote distancing or arranging desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.
- Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.
- Create distance between children on school buses (e.g., seat children one child per row, skip rows) when possible.
- Consider use of non-classroom space as practical, including regular use of outdoor space, weather permitting.

- **School Bus Transportation**

- Use mitigation measures to reduce risk in a school bus setting, including:
 - Students and staff should wear face coverings at all times on a bus, especially when six feet distancing is not possible
 - Keep windows open whenever possible to maximize ventilation
 - Maximize space between students wherever possible. Utilization of three students per seat is not recommended. It is acknowledged that maintaining a strict six feet distancing standard at all times may be difficult.
 - Consider staggering arrival and drop-off times and locations to reduce risk of transmission.
 - School buses need to be sanitized between busloads of passengers.
 - Train bus drivers in the areas of hygiene and safety for students.

- **School Arrival/Departure**

- Have a wellness check protocol in place for students, families, and staff, including having families/staff conduct a wellness self-check before coming to school. Consider using the [Sonoma County COVID Check App](#) as a means of facilitating these wellness checks.
- Students/staff with a fever of 100 or higher should stay home.
- Minimize contact at school between students, staff, families and the community at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Stagger arrival and drop off-times and locations as consistently as possible as to minimize scheduling challenges for families.
- Designated routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible, may be helpful. Put in place other protocols to limit direct contact with others as much as possible.
- Use of privacy boards or clear screens when practical.

- **Physical Barriers and Guides**

- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least six feet apart (e.g., reception desks).
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and children remain at least six feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g. guides for creating “one-way routes” in hallways).
- Make a good faith effort to space seating/desks at least six feet apart. Based on current social distancing standards from the CA Department of Public Health, a separation of six feet between students is recommended for ensuring student/staff safety and

health, particularly for the purpose of setting up a classroom and establishing spacing between student desks/learning environments. This will likely reduce classroom capacity.

- **Communal Spaces**

- Communal use shared spaces such as dining halls and playgrounds with shared playground equipment if possible; otherwise, stagger use and [clean and disinfect](#) between use.
- Add physical barriers, such as plastic flexible screens, between bathroom sinks especially when they cannot be at least six feet apart.
- Make a good faith effort to space seating/desks at least six feet apart. Based on current social distancing standards from the CA Department of Public Health, a separation of six feet between students is recommended for ensuring student/staff safety and health, particularly for the purpose of setting up a classroom and establishing spacing between student desks/learning environments. This will likely reduce classroom capacity.

- **Food Services**

- Have children bring their own meals as feasible, or serve individually plated or “grab and go” meals in classrooms, outdoors, or in a dining hall or cafeteria, while ensuring the [safety of children with food allergies](#). If common areas such as dining halls and cafeterias are used, students must be safely separated by cohorts while maintaining the social distance standards with proper disinfection after each use.
- Use disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes). If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Individuals should [wash their hands](#) after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal. Avoid sharing food and utensils and ensure the [safety of children with food allergies](#).

MAINTAINING HEALTHY OPERATIONS

Schools may consider implementing several strategies to maintain healthy operations.

- **Protections for Staff and Children at Higher Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19**

- Offer options for staff at [higher risk for severe illness](#) (including older adults and people of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions per doctor’s note) that limit their exposure risk (e.g., telework, modified job responsibilities that limit exposure risk).
- Offer options for students at [higher risk of severe illness](#) that limit their exposure risk (e.g., virtual learning opportunities).
- Consistent with applicable law, put in place policies to protect the privacy of people at [higher risk for severe illness](#) regarding underlying medical conditions.

- **Check for Signs & Symptoms**

- Require parents to keep sick students at home and staff who are sick or who have had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay at home.
- Implement screening and other procedures for all staff and students before they enter the facility.
 - Have a wellness check protocol in place for students, families, and staff.
 - Ask all individuals about COVID-19 symptoms within the last 24 hours and whether anyone in their home has had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test.

- Exclude any student, parent, caregiver or staff showing symptoms of COVID-19. Staff should discuss with parent/caregiver and refer to the student's health history form and/or emergency card to identify if the student has a history of allergies, which would not be a reason to exclude.
 - Monitor staff and students throughout the day for signs of illness; send home students and staff with a fever of 100.0 degrees or higher, cough or other COVID-19 symptoms after isolating from the general room population. Notify parents.
 - Policies should not penalize students and families for missing class, and provide flexible sick leave for staff to the extent practical.
- **Regulatory Awareness**
 - Be aware of local or state regulatory agency policies related to group gatherings to determine if events can be held.
- **Gatherings, Visitors, and Field Trips**
 - Gatherings, or meetings, should be conducted via a virtual platform whenever possible. Promote social distancing of at least six feet between people if events are held. Limit group size to the extent possible.
 - Events (beyond normal classroom activities) are restricted to no more than 10 people while maintaining the six-foot social distancing standards.
 - Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible – especially with individuals who are not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, county).
 - Pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, as possible.
 - Make a good faith effort to space seating/desks at least six feet apart. Based on current social distancing standards from the CA Department of Public Health, a separation of six feet between students is recommended for ensuring student/staff safety and health, particularly for the purpose of setting up a classroom and establishing spacing between student desks/learning environments. This will likely reduce classroom capacity.
- **Identifying Small Groups and Keeping Them Together (Cohorting)**
 - Ensure that student and staff groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff (all day for young children, and as much as possible for older children). Keep the same students and teacher or staff with each cohort to the greatest extent practical.
 - Limit mixing between groups if possible.
 - Students may need to mix cohorts for the purpose of transportation or after-school care. When this occurs, tracking who is in each cohort becomes critical to enable effective contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 case.
- **Staggered Scheduling**
 - Stagger arrival and drop-off times or locations by cohort or put in place other protocols to limit contact between cohorts and direct contact with parents as much as possible.
 - When possible, use flexible worksites (e.g., telework) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) to help establish policies and practices for social distancing (maintaining distance of approximately six feet) between employees and others, especially if social distancing is recommended by state and local health authorities.
- **Student Absences and Attendance**
 - Direct any student who contracts the virus or lives with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home in accordance with state and local health

directives.

- Students who are infected with COVID-19 shall be excluded from on-campus instruction until a medical provider states in writing that the student is no longer contagious. (Education Code 49451; Health and Safety Code 120230; 5 CCR 202).
- Per Education Code 48205, student absences due to illness or quarantine are considered excused absences.
- When a student is absent, the student's parent/guardian shall notify the school of the reason for the absence. A physician's verification of a student's illness or quarantine may be submitted, but is not required.
- **Athletics**
 - Refer to the CDC's guidance regarding [Considerations for Youth Sports](#).
 - Schools will conform to all CDE and California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) sports restrictions and game/team safety and hygiene protocols.
 - Schools will need to follow consistent and stringent cleaning protocols of athletic equipment and personal body contact gear.
 - The use of locker rooms and showers is not optimal and is a high-risk area.
 - Contact sports are restricted and are considered high risk under CDC guidelines.
 - Indoor intense physical exercise is discouraged, especially if the HVAC system cannot be upgraded or the activity causes warm moist air for the virus to transmit.
 - Physical education classes should be conducted outside whenever possible, restrict the use of locker rooms/showers, maintain six-foot distancing, and avoid any contact sport activities.
- **High-Risk Electives**
 - Consider that some electives are higher risk than others. Music/band, choir, and theater pose higher risks and districts should consider providing virtual options or ensuring social distancing.
- **Designated COVID-19 Point of Contact**
 - Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns (e.g., site administrator or health aide). All school staff and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
 - Provide impacted individuals with parent-student guidance documents (including materials in second language if needed in compliance with federal law).
- **Participation in Community Response Efforts**
 - Consider participating with local authorities in broader COVID-19 community response efforts (e.g., sitting on community response committees).
- **Communication Systems**
 - Maintain communication systems that allow staff and families to self-report symptoms and receive prompt notifications of exposures and closures, while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Put systems in place for:
 - Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, having staff and families self-report to the school if they or their student have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with [health information sharing regulations for COVID-19](#) (e.g. see "Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts" in the Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick section below) and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations relating to privacy and confidentiality, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
 - Notifying staff, families, and the public of school closures and any restrictions

in place to limit COVID-19 exposure (e.g., limited hours of operation).

- **Leave (Time Off) Policies and Excused Absence Policies**
 - Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable staff to stay home when they are sick, have been exposed, or caring for someone who is sick.
 - Examine and revise policies for leave, telework, and employee compensation.
 - Leave policies should be flexible and not punish people for taking time off, and should allow sick employees to stay home and away from co-workers.
 - Develop policies for return-to-school after COVID-19 illness. CDC's [criteria to discontinue home isolation and quarantine](#) can inform these policies.
- **Back-Up Staffing Plan**
 - Monitor absenteeism of students and employees, cross-train staff, and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- **Staff Training**
 - Train staff on all safety protocols.
 - Conduct training virtually or ensure that [social distancing](#) is maintained during training.
- **Recognize Signs and Symptoms**
 - Have a wellness check protocol in place for students, families, and staff, including having families/staff conduct a wellness self-check before coming to school. Consider using the [Sonoma County COVID Check App](#) as a means of facilitating these wellness checks.
 - Students/staff with a fever of 100 or higher should stay home.
 - Monitor staff and students throughout the day for signs of illness; send home students and staff with a fever of 100.0 degrees or higher, cough or other COVID-19 symptoms after isolating from the general room population and notify parents.
 - Health checks should be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. School administrators may use examples of screening methods in CDC's supplemental [Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) as a guide for screening children and CDC's [General Business FAQs](#) for screening staff.
- **Sharing Facilities**
 - Organizations that share or use the school facilities are to be restricted when practical. If granted permission, they must practice all school safety protocols for social distancing and cleaning.
- **Support Coping and Resilience**
 - Encourage employees and students to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.
 - Promote employees and students eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind. Encourage employees and students to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling. Consider posting signage for the national distress hotline: 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746

PREPARING FOR WHEN SOMEONE GETS SICK

Schools may consider implementing several strategies to prepare for when someone gets sick.

- Develop a plan for the possibility of repeated closures of classes, groups, or entire facilities when persons associated with the facility or in the community become ill with COVID-19.
- Work with school administrators, nurses and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.

- Any students or staff exhibiting symptoms should immediately be required to wear a face covering and be required to wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility.
- **Advise Staff and Families of Sick Students of Home isolation Criteria**
 - Sick staff members or students should not return until they have met CDC's [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#).
- **Isolate and Transport Those Who are Sick**
 - Make sure that staff and families know that they (staff) or their children (families) should not come to school, and that they should notify school officials (e.g., the designated COVID-19 point of contact) if they (staff) or their child (families) become sick with COVID-19 [symptoms](#), test positive for COVID-19, or have been [exposed](#) to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case.
 - Immediately separate staff and [children](#) with COVID-19 [symptoms](#) (such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath) at school. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are, and follow [CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others](#) who are sick.
 - Work with school administrators, nurses, and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms, or who tests positive but does not have symptoms. School nurses and other healthcare providers should use [Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions](#) when caring for sick people. See: [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection](#).
 - Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. If you are calling an ambulance or bringing someone to the hospital, try to call first to alert them that the person may have COVID-19.
- **Clean and Disinfect**
 - Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after [cleaning and disinfecting](#)
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning and disinfection products](#), including storing products securely away from children.
- **Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts**
 - In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, school administrators should notify [local health officials](#), staff, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality as required by state and federal laws including the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and HIPAA. See below for Sonoma County protocol.
 - Inform those who have had [close contact](#) with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and [self-monitor for symptoms](#), and follow [CDC guidance](#) if symptoms develop.
- **Sonoma County Health Notification for Student/Staff Illness**
 - Public Health Nurses will notify a school/district when a student or staff member is confirmed positive with COVID-19 and will lead contact tracing efforts as needed.
 - Work with the county health department through their existing protocols to conduct testing and contact tracing, as needed, and identify whether quarantine of impacted students and staff is necessary. Contacts will be identified based on the duration of the contact, the proximity of the contact, and the number of people.
 - See "Considerations for Partial or Total Closures" below for information regarding quarantine.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTIAL OR TOTAL CLOSURES

- Check State and local orders and health department notices daily about transmission in the area or closures and adjust operations accordingly.
- Quarantine may be necessary for individuals who had close contact (six feet or less) with a COVID-positive individual during the infectious period for 15 minutes or longer.
- The need to quarantine an entire class cohort or school site will be determined by Sonoma County Public Health officials depending on the extent of exposure (duration, numbers exposed, closeness of contact, etc...).
- Closure of an entire school would be determined by County Public Health officials if there is an outbreak involving many cases in more than one classroom at that school site.
- If a student or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, the classroom or facility may need to be closed for at least 24 hours before it can be cleaned.
- When a student, teacher or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and exposed others at the school, implement the following steps:
 - In consultation with the local public health department, the appropriate school official may consider if partial/full school closure is warranted and length of time based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.
 - Given standard guidance for isolation at home for at least 14 days after close contact, the classroom or office where the patient was based will typically need to close temporarily as students or staff isolate.
 - Additional close contacts at school outside of a classroom should also isolate at home.
 - Additional areas of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual may also need to be closed temporarily for cleaning and disinfection.
 - Implement communication plans for school closure to include outreach to students, parents, teachers, staff and the community.
 - Include information for parents regarding labor laws, information regarding Disability Insurance, Paid Family Leave and Unemployment Insurance, as applicable for public local educational agencies.
 - Provide guidance to parents, teachers and staff reminding them of the importance of community physical distancing measures while a school is closed, including discouraging students or staff from gathering elsewhere.
 - Develop a plan for continuity of education. Consider in that plan how to also continue nutrition and other services provided in the regular school setting to establish alternate mechanisms for these services to continue.
 - Maintain regular communications with the local public health department.



Instructional Considerations for Serving All Students

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS & CONSIDERATIONS

Districts are encouraged to prioritize providing a high-quality instructional program by following best practices in the areas of:

- Curriculum selection and instructional delivery models
- Assessment practices and policies, including local and statewide assessments
- Services to special populations, including students with disabilities, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English Learners, Homeless and Foster Youth
- Access and use of instructional technology
- Expanded learning opportunities
- Other key systems and services

The “Stronger Together” guide to reopening by the California Department of Education (CDE) outlines numerous possible instructional models that districts may utilize during COVID-19. Districts are encouraged to reference these options when planning for the fall. Generally, instructional delivery options for the fall are as follows:

2020-2021 Learning Model Considerations

Options to Serve All Students in the Current Moment


Guiding Principles

- Protect student, staff, and community health
- Foster student learning and progress
- Maintain positive learning environments
- Foster student emotional health
- Care for our most vulnerable populations

TRADITIONAL LEARNING MODEL	HYBRID LEARNING MODEL (MODIFIED TRADITIONAL)	DISTANCE LEARNING MODEL	PLANNING TO PIVOT (FORCED SCHOOL CLOSURE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily in-school attendance with staffing modifications• Integrated social emotional learning• Standards-based curriculum/assessment• Student engagement through instructional best practices• Expanded technology skills through 1:1 device initiative and digital citizenship• Interventions and enrichment to accommodate all learners• Considerations for district-approved independent study for families needing flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social distancing model with some in-class instruction and some distance learning• Integrated social emotional learning• Standards-based curriculum/assessment• Student engagement through instructional best practices and interactive technology• Classroom-based interventions and enrichment to accommodate all learners• Supplemental digital support for academic and social emotional learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily remote instruction and interactions from teacher• Integrated social emotional learning• Standards-based curriculum/assessment• Student engagement through instructional best practices and interactive technology• Targeted intervention and enrichment• Supplemental digital support for academic and social emotional learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scheduled remote interactions with teacher while student learns at home• Social emotional supports• Standards-based curriculum/assessment• Student engagement through instructional best practices and interactive technology• Targeted intervention and enrichment• Supplemental digital support for academic and social emotional learning

Providing Meaningful Learning to Ensure Health and Safety

Note: The selection of a learning model should be informed by local district conditions along with guidance from the Sonoma County Office of Education, Sonoma County's Public Health Officer, California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

 **Sonoma County**
Office of Education

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Key Priorities Social and emotional learning (SEL) will be critical to ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-engaging students • Supporting adults • Rebuilding relationships • Creating a foundation for academic learning 		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the emotional well-being of all at the forefront of decision-making. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Consider both intra- and inter-personal SEL needs ◦ Respond accordingly by building in opportunities for both within the structure of "the school day" ◦ Determine whether synchronous or asynchronous student learning experiences are best for the need at hand. • Continue to remove barriers to student success that existed before COVID-19. • Prioritize collaboration between teachers, staff, administrators, and families. Help educators to understand that it is everyone's job in the organization to support SEL for students, and provide the resources and training for them to do so. • Design opportunities for adults to connect, hear, and cultivate their own social-emotional competencies. • Check in with every student every week through offline and real-time conversations (monitor students' social and emotional status as well as their academic growth). • Provide students with more time to complete tasks. • Provide students with opportunities to redo or revise a task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence Prevention in Practice • Coping with COVID-19 • Helping Children with Traumatic Separation or Traumatic Grief Related to COVID-19 • CDE Resources: Youth Suicide Prevention • CASEL - Leveraging SEL as You Prepare to Reopen and Renew Your School Community • 4-key-aspects-teaching-online-class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inclusive of all stakeholders (i.e. students, families, educators, administrators) • Provide educators with time to reflect, learn, grow and collaborate. • Use data to deepen relationships and continuously improve support for students, families, and staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Collect feedback ◦ Share feedback ◦ Engage all stakeholders in planning how the school can better meet their needs

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: YOUNG LEARNERS

Young Learners			
Key Priorities	Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
<p>Support students in feeling safe and connected</p> <p>Young learners learn through play and hands on activities</p> <p>Support students during transitions</p> <p>Support development of emotional literacy</p>	<p>Build relationships - teacher to student, teacher to family, student to student</p> <p>Establish and maintain communication with families and students</p> <p>Be intentional about providing time for play during the day</p> <p>Create learning opportunities for young learners to be actively engaged</p> <p>Create schedules and routines that include play.</p> <p>Allow flexibility in adhering to schedules as the need arises.</p> <p>Provide strategies to support students in identifying and discussing their emotions.</p> <p>Acknowledge fears and concerns through honest, clear communication. Provide information that is developmentally appropriate</p>	<p>Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)</p>	<p>Provide families with the tools and manipulatives that young children will use during their learning.</p> <p>Provide teachers with lists of read aloud books that would support identifying and discussing emotions</p>

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: FOSTER AND HOMELESS YOUTH

Foster and Homeless Youth			
Key Priorities	Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
<p>Include Foster and Homeless Education as part of annual staff training.</p> <p>Supporting Educational Continuity</p> <p>Maintain records of youth identified as foster and youth determined by the school team to live in a situation that qualifies as homeless under the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act</p> <p>Maintain Communication with Caregivers and other key members of the student's support team</p> <p>Support the dissemination of community resource information</p>	<p>If registration/enrollment is being done on-line, include a digital residency questionnaire.</p> <p>When determining residency, keep in mind school of origin protections and right to immediate enrollment.</p> <p>FY Liaison should have access to the CALPADS 5.7 report and run it regularly. The information about youth identified as foster should be used for individual case management.</p> <p>Provide clear, detailed school schedule and staff contact information on websites and voicemail. Include contact emails and phone numbers for the district and school site foster and homeless education liaisons.</p>	<p>United Way of the Wine Country is proud to announce the launch of our collaboration with United Ways of California's new website portal, KinshipCareCA.org, serving California's kinship and foster care families and service providers. We are excited for this opportunity to serve kinship and foster families in our five-county region and to share this resource with you.</p>	<p>Staff will be more informed about students' rights and the resources available, and this will strengthen the support provided to students</p>

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Instructional Delivery to Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize evidence-based practices Train teachers and paraeducators on use of virtual/classroom instructional tools Utilize curriculum aligned to common core standards Develop curriculum based on individual student need (i.e., goals drive placement) Differentiated instruction Utilize UDL Identify and utilize, as appropriate, free video recording programs and captioning Primary language support as needed Utilize technology, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Microsoft Immersive Reader Overdrive Audible Beeline Reader Text to speech software Textbook publisher's audio format Bookshare CAST Bookbuilder Learning Ally Readify Closed captioning is available through Google Meet and Mercury Reader Chrome Extension. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAPTAIN: EBP Trainings United States Office of Special Education Programs: Evidence-Based and Promising Practices to Support Continuity of Learning for Students With Disabilities Educating All Learners Alliance: Special Education: Educating All Learners During the COVID-19 Disaster CAST: Universal Design for Learning ASCD: Differentiated Instruction Elk Grove Unified School District: Virtual Academy Kami: Your Digital Classroom Hero Schoology Exchange: A Beginner's Guide to Flipped Classroom North State COVID-19 Resources (SELPA) California Department of Education: California Practitioners' Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities USDE Office of Civil Rights: Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Schools While Protecting the Civil Rights of Students Beeline Reader: Read Faster and Easier All Day Long CAST: Universal Design for Learning Book Builder Readify: Understand What You Read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for moderate/severe teachers doing both delivery models Assure resources for primary language support Support when students with sensory needs or other needs refuse to comply with public health measures (mask- refusal, unable to socially distance) Support for staff in managing students who are a danger to themselves or others (i.e., eloping, self-injury) Protocol needed in consideration of health measures Medically fragile students may not be able to return to school Some students may need diapering, medical/health procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gowns Gloves Goggles

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Instructional Delivery to Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities (continued)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Ally: Audio Books for Dyslexia & Learning Disabilities 	
Home Instruction		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify available instructors (Home hospital instructors have the correct credentials) • Utilize PPE when going into homes • Schedule home instruction during the regular school day and not after school when students with health needs are tired and require rest • Primary language support as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: COVID-19 • Waves of Communication: 3 Tips for Teaching about PPE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify if additional staff is needed to cover any increase in SPED students • Determine if any staff could assist with home instruction.
Assessment Timelines for Triennial and initial IEPs upon return (30 days)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assure monitoring and oversight of clearly communicated protocols to all staff involved in scheduling • Schedule IEPs on time, unless directed otherwise by CDE or Federal government • Conduct assessments and IEP meetings for initials and triennials within 30 days of the return to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Department of Education: Special Education Guidance for COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider scheduling additional staff to complete assessments if available • Allocate additional substitutes to be placed in SPED classrooms while teachers complete assessments and IEP meetings • Follow/establish policies and procedures for initials and assessments
Increase IEP Meetings		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire additional/temporary staff to assist with assessments and IEP administration designee • Adjust IEP goals to consider home instruction if a student does not return to the brick and mortar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Department of Education: Special Education Guidance for COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify if additional translators and interpreters are needed to meet the needs of parents whose primary language is other than English when there will be more IEPs than usual • IEPs may need amendments to reflect a different educational model

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Students with Visual Impairments		
<p>Remote Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While engaged in remote learning, students may not have access to supports such as on-site braille transcribing, assistive technology, or support from an intervener. It is up to schools and educators to seek out methods and avenues for the provision of supports typically available to students. https://www.isbe.net/Documents/B-VI-Ideas-During-Pandemic.pdf • Teachers should provide accessible online content to visually impaired students or provide alternative assignments that are accessible to students with visual impairments. Teachers can consult a Teacher of the Visually Impaired or Assistive Technology Specialist as needed. • Students should have access to the technology they use in the school setting with accessibility functions: computer, tablet, enlarged screens, braille display, magnifiers, CCTV, etc. • Extra time to complete assignment due to eye strain/eye fatigue. Hands-on learning or auditory assignments available to supplement learning should eye fatigue/eye strain persist • 14-day window to produce and deliver tactile materials for student use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookshare: An Accessible Online Library for people with print disabilities <p>Technology Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.perkinselearning.org/technology <p>Remote Learning Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.cde.state.co.us/cd/esp/vi_incl_blindness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with District Orientation and Mobility Specialist

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Students with Visual Impairments (continued)		
Return to Campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visually Impaired students who rely on verbal input may need to have access to a FM system due to masks or FM system to communicate with paraeducator while maintaining proper distance. • Students may fatigue quicker due to active listening when someone with a mask is talking. • Assistance with campus rules/regulations: Posted rules provided in accessible format, tactile markers in addition to visual markers, verbal/tactile/accessible schedule changes. • Braille signage and tactile markers disinfected daily as part of the cleaning routine. • Active Learning toys and materials used with only one student or disinfected after each use. • Modified sighted guide techniques (i.e. both parties wear mask and gloves, wear long sleeves, in-service to explain safety measures) • Explicit directions/demonstration of how emergency procedures will work (i.e. fire drills) • Arrange for students to return to school sites where the layout may have changed due to social distancing regulations 		

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Students with Visual Impairments (continued)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a map of the campus and make it available before the student returns to school • Create a map of the classroom and make it available before the student returns to school <p>Arrange for consistency of the campus/ classroom setting</p>		
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the needs of students who must be able to see the lips of speakers. Obtain clear masks or shields for staff and students <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Masks and face shields can degrade the signal even if Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) is used 2. Face shields may allow for a better signal when using remote microphone technology and better access to facial expressions • Account for an ASL interpreter in the classroom for DHH students and determine the logistics for social distance • Consider the use of remote transcription service (Typewell, CART, C-Print) if student is not able to follow in classroom instruction or instruction during distance learning <p>(continued on next page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA Hands and Voices: DHH considerations-Covid-19 • https://www.hearinglikeme.com/what-to-know-about-clear-medical-masks-for-lip-reading/ • Examples of Clear Face Masks and Shields • https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/covid-19-information • Legislative Analyst Office: Improving Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential personal protective Equipment (PPE) will need to be procured, inventoried and replenished as needed. • Determine additional staffing to address social distancing of students for services and mainstreaming when a student has an ASL translator in class • Disinfecting wipes will need to be procured, inventoried and replenished as need for disinfecting Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) • Teachers and staff will need to be trained on proper cleaning technique of disinfecting Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT)

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the use of closed captioning on all videos for in class and remote learning. Auto-captioning software is available for some forms of distance learning platforms. Contact the DHH Teacher or Educational Audiologist assigned to school for assistance • Consider that the student may require a note taker, access to teacher notes or use of personal phone, iPad or other device to take pictures of notes, graphics or other information on the white board • If Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) is used in the classroom the following procedures should be followed if technology is passed between teachers or staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloves are recommended • Use disinfecting wipes. Water based disinfectant is optimal or a solution of 70% isopropanol. Do not use hand sanitizer on equipment. Avoid touching microphone openings with liquid. • Wipe HAT equipment including the lanyard. • Consider the use of Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) during distance learning if needed. Contact DHH Teacher or Educational Audiologist <p>(continued on next page)</p>		

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students (continued)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts should consider a plan to assist DHH students during an emergency on campus such as use of a buddy and practice what to do in case of an emergency 		
Transportation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow all transportation protocols outlined on p. 13 of this document. Additionally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Account for bus aides who are required on the bus and the 6-foot social distancing requirement Cleanliness and care of safety harness/vest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Cleaning and Disinfectant for Non-emergency Transportation Vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train bus drivers in areas of hygiene and safety for students/staff (bus aides) Train third party transportation drivers in areas of hygiene and safety for students/ staff (bus aides)
Restrooms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor restrooms to ensure social distancing Determine clearance of staff to be in restroom area during student use and maintain 6-foot distancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools and Home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-on-one paraprofessionals needing PPE wear (gowns, masks, gloves)
ADA Requirements if SPED Classrooms Are Moved		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider accessibility for all students, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doors Ramps Elevator for second floor placements for students with mobility issues Safety rails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United States Department of Education: Office of Civil Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide emergency training for staff and students
School Nurses		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine adequate nursing staff to address health and safety of all students on campus <p>(continued on next page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National School Boards Association: COVID-19 <p>(continued on next page)</p>	

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
School Nurses (continued)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule the nurse to amend all initial and tri IEPs and assess students within the first 30 days of return to school • Acquire PPE • Provide training for frontline office staff in the absence of a nurse • Acquire adequate supplies for cleaning and hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Industrial Relations: Division of Occupational Safety and Health: Aerosol Transmissible Diseases • California School Nurse Association (CSNO) COVID-19 Health Resources 	
Classroom Environment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange the classroom environment so students remain within sight lines of the teacher during instruction (i.e., nothing barricading or blocking view of student, like a screen) • Ensure the environment allows for students to navigate the classroom freely for wheelchair users, visually impaired students and others who require assistance to participate fully in instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Disability Rights Network: COVID-19 and Education of Students with Disabilities Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train all staff including teacher and paraeducators, janitors, office staff and campus supervision staff (noon aides, cafeteria workers) for transitioning back to a classroom with social distancing
Mental Health support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a calming/quiet area of the classroom to teach appropriate social/ emotional skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Conference of State Legislative: Bridging the Gap to Youth Mental Health • California Department of Education: Help for Students in Crisis 	
Related Service Providers		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Speech Language Pathologists caseloads. <p>(continued on next page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Department of Education: Questions and Answers on Providing Services During COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess staffing needs to meet demands

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Related Service Providers (continued)		
<p>It is recommended for SLPs to have a caseload of 55 students or 40 in preschool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange for providers to provide services to students at the school site and students who stay home • Conduct any assessments and initial referrals • Determine and conduct any private school assessments 		
Legal Ramifications		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EdSource: Liability in online instruction of special education students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the need for an on-site attorney to assist with compensatory education ramifications
Cleaning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange for cleaning of equipment and devices, including roller boards, slant boards, bujon devices, wheel chairs, standers, markers, mini white boards, trays, riTon chairs, sensory items, seat back storage bag, iPads, AAC devices and harness for AAC devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs 	
Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) and Parent Privately Placed Students		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct any needed assessments • Schedule and hold IEP meetings • Arrange for district-site check-ins • Arrange for consultation Minutes for privately placed students • Coordinate parent tours of STRTP's 		

Special Education (continued)		
Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Preschool Inclusion		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider ratios and social distancing guidance, social skills required to typically developing peers, health and safety precautions when providing meals and snacks to preschoolers, social distancing in centers, and circle time, and the impact of social distancing on goals that call for growth in social skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Division for Early Childhood of the Council of Exceptional Children Preschool Resources for Parents and Teachers 	
Inclusive Classrooms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive practices - Consultation, Monitoring, Push-in, Pull-out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty Focus: How to Build Inclusive Practices in Education PaTTAN: Inclusive Practices William & Mary School of Education: Effective Teaching Practices for Students in Inclusive Classrooms 	
Social Emotional - Behavior		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow MTSS Framework Teach SEL Curriculum Ensure for peer modeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Department of Education: Multi- Tiered System of Supports Boys Town: Saving Children, Helping Families Second Step: Social Emotional Learning Schoolyard: Inclusion & Social Emotional Learning for Students with Special Needs Nearpod: Social Emotional Learning K-12 Mindful: Healthy Mind, Healthy life Ever Widening Circles: Making Mindfulness a Habit Yoga: How to Practice Mindfulness Meditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for sanitization of: sensory area, small group, and rotating table Utilize District BCBA

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: ENGLISH LEARNERS

	English Learners			
	Key Priorities	Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Responsive Schools	English learners are assets to our schools and community. LEAs need to ensure that they embrace what ELs bring and who they are, while also providing them with the support they need to succeed.	<p>The EL Roadmap principles should continue to guide LEAs in implementing instructional programs for English learners during distance learning and the transition to reopening schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Principle One: Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools ○ Principle Two: Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access ○ Principle Three: System Conditions That Support Effectiveness ○ Principle Four: Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EL Roadmap Resource Hub • Stronger Together: English Learners (CDE) 	The goal remains for English learners to achieve the same rigorous grade-level academic standards that are expected of all students, within a reasonable period of time. To accomplish these goals, all English learners must receive a comprehensive program of designated and integrated ELD instruction targeted to their proficiency level, and appropriate academic instruction in a language acquisition program
	English Learners (continued)			

	Key Priorities	Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting local Latinos. While not all ELs are Latinos and not all Latinos are ELs, there is heavy crossover in Sonoma County. Keep communication with families a top priority. ELAC and DELAC meetings, which are public meetings, may be held virtually, provided the LEA follows the requirements specified in N-29-20, including providing parents with advance notice of the meeting time, agenda, and teleconferencing information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families may be under stress and pressure from reduced income or the threat of losing jobs or housing. By actively listening for these concerns, schools can better help to connect families with the support and resources they need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking Points CA Parent and Youth Helpline ELAC and DELAC FAQ for COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask families what mode of communication works best for them to ensure active participation. Coordinate focus groups and/or empathy interviews to ensure that families of ELs have an opportunity to share their input rather than only receive information. Leverage local community partnerships to reach families.
English Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All English learners must continue to receive designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD) as part of their educational curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAs can determine where, when, and what the students receive in order to continue to make progress toward English language proficiency and <p>(continued on next page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Key Considerations for Supporting English Learners with Distance Learning ELD in the Distance Learning Landscape <p>(continued on next page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all English learners, regardless of grade or proficiency level, are receiving designated ELD. Emphasize oral language during instruction, even in virtual spaces
English Learners (continued)				

	Key Priorities	Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
English Language Development (continued)		<p>meet grade level academic achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These services may be provided virtually, online, or via telephone • There are no minimum number of minutes required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerations for Inclusivity and Support within Designated ELD in Remote Learning 	
ELPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summative and Initial ELPAC updates are occurring frequently. • LEAs should follow the most recent guidance provided by the CDE on Reclassification. LEAs may not exit an English learner from EL status unless a student has demonstrated proficiency (level 4) on the ELPAC. If an LEA was not able to administer the Summative ELPAC to a student during the 2019-20 school year due to closures, <p>(continued on next page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the LEA ELPAC Coordinator is receiving the Assessment Spotlight and acting upon the information sent out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDE EL Updates Newsletters • ELPAC Website 	<p>Register for the SCOE EL Collaborative to receive ELPAC and other EL updates regularly.</p>
English Learners (continued)				

	Key Priorities	Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
ELPAC (continued)	<p>an ELPAC level 4 score from the 2018-19 administration may be used, provided the student meets the remaining three criterion required by the state</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An optional Summative ELPAC window in the fall is still pending approval. 			

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: SUPPORT FOR LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Support for Learning Differences			
Key Priorities	Best Practices	Resources	Planning Implications
Provide ALL students with access to high-quality grade level instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear learning goals aligned to CA CCSS Content Standards Design student learning experiences using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to improve access for all learners Provide for synchronous and asynchronous learners Use high quality instructional materials Use technology that supports learning goals and enhances the learning experience 	<p>All Learners:</p> <p>Learning Designed</p> <p>Getting started with UDL</p> <p>Educating All Learners</p> <p>Distance Learning - Curriculum and Instruction Resources (CDE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide educators with professional development related to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Design for Learning instructional technology content area expertise/pedagogy (as needed) Engage in two-way communication between school and students/families regarding learning goals and instructional model/expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elicit authentic, ongoing student and parent feedback re: student learning experience Allocate time to analyze and respond to that feedback

Appendix

The background is a solid blue color. It features several decorative elements: a solid teal circle in the top right corner, a semi-circle with white diagonal hatching on the left side, a solid teal semi-circle in the bottom left corner, and another semi-circle with white diagonal hatching in the bottom right corner.

OTHER RESOURCES

Click the links below for further information

- [CDC: Latest COVID-19 Information](#)
- [CDC: Cleaning and Disinfection](#)
- [CDC: Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [CDC: Guidance for Schools and Childcare Centers](#)
- [CDC: COVID-19 Prevention](#)
- [CDC: Handwashing Information](#)
- [CDC: Face Coverings](#)
- [CDC: Social Distancing](#)
- [CDC: K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs](#)
- [CDC: COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [CDC: People at Higher Risk](#)
- [CDC: Managing Stress and Coping](#)
- [CDC: Communication Resources](#)
- [CDC: Community Mitigation](#)
- [OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)
- [EPA List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#)
- [Health & Human Services: HIPAA and COVID-19](#)
- [Re-Opening School Checklist](#)
- [CASBO Guidance for Schools & Districts](#)
- [ACSA School Reopening Schedule Modalities](#)
- [CCEE Communication Tools & Sample Letters](#)
- [CDE Quick Guide to Independent Study](#)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

“Close contact with a person with COVID19” shall mean that a person was less than six-feet from a confirmed positive COVID19 individual for at least fifteen minutes during the infectious period. Infectious period is 48 hours before the confirmed positive COVID19 individual’s symptoms began (or in the absence of symptoms, 48 hours before the date the test sample was collected) and until the individual is released from isolation.

“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 covering that hides or obscures the wearer’s eyes or forehead is not a Face Covering. Examples of Face Coverings include a scarf or bandanna; a neck gaiter; a homemade covering made from a t-shirt, sweatshirt, or towel, held on with rubber bands or otherwise; or a mask, which need not be medical-grade. A Face Covering may be factory-made, or may be handmade and improvised from ordinary household materials. The Face Covering should be comfortable, so that the wearer can breathe comfortably through the nose and does not have to adjust it frequently, so as to avoid touching the face. For as long as medical grade masks such as N95 masks and surgical masks are in short supply, members of the public should not purchase those masks as Face Coverings under this Order; those medical grade masks should be reserved for health care providers and first responders. In general, even when not required by this Order, people are strongly encouraged to wear Face Coverings when in public. Also, for Face Coverings that are not disposed of after each use, people should clean them frequently and have extra ones available so that they have a clean one available for use.

The following types of coverings do not comply with the existing Order:

- Halloween or plastic masks;
- Ski masks with holes for the nose or mouth;
- Masks that have a one-way valve designed for easier breathing (the valves are often a raised plastic disk about the size of a quarter, on the front or side of the mask);
- Holes or one-way valves allow droplets out of the mask, putting others nearby at risk.

“Gathering” means meetings or other events that bring together persons from multiple households at the same time for a shared or group experience in a single room, space, or place such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, or other indoor or outdoor space that is not permitted under the existing local or state public health orders.

“High touch surfaces” includes, but is not limited to, playground equipment, tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>)

“Higher Risk for Severe Illness” means those who meet the CDC criteria for people who are at a higher risk for severe illness (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>)

“Isolation” means the separation of a person who have been infected with an infectious agent from other persons. Isolation ends when the Health Officer has determined that a person is no longer contagious. A person is determined to no longer be contagious when the period of isolation of a person will be one of the following:

- a) Persons with a positive test who never develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must isolate for 10 days from date of their positive test (which is the date the test sample was collected).
- b) Persons who are isolating because they are likely to have COVID-19 based on symptoms but have not tested or are awaiting test results may end their period of isolation if they test negative for COVID-19. If the person never tests for COVID-19, the person’s period of isolation is the same as the person with symptoms and a positive test in subsection (c).
- c) Persons with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and a positive test must isolate until:
 - a. At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of both fever (100.0F or higher) without the use of fever reducing medication and improvement of cough and shortness of breath; AND
 - b. At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms started.

“PPE” means personal protective equipment (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>)

“Quarantine” means the separation and restriction of movement of persons who, while not yet ill, have been or may have been exposed to an infectious agent and therefore may become infectious. Quarantine ends when the incubation period has expired (14 days from the date that the person was in last contact with a test positive COVID19 individual) and the person does not become sick with a fever (fever is a body temperature of 100.0F, or higher), cough, or shortness of breath (even if their symptoms are very mild). A person who becomes sick will be subject to isolation.

“Symptoms”, “Signs & Symptoms” or “Sick” means a person is confirmed positive for COVID19, or has symptoms consistent with COVID19 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>).

PLANNING COMPONENTS FOR REOPENING SCHOOLS

Component A: Current plans

Districts, Charters and Private Schools should continue...

- Follow the Sonoma County Roadmap to Reopening schools.
- Maintain 6-foot social distancing based on current county epidemiology factors.
- Limited student cohort groups.
- Limited school occupancy.

Component B: Moving to the next level

Districts need to plan for the following...

- The County Health Officer and County Superintendent of Schools will monitor epidemiology and COVID-19 data for one month following the reopening of schools.
- If the epidemiology and statistics permit, the County Health Officer and County Superintendent of Schools will move to a transition for increased school occupancy.
- Move to 4'-6' student social distancing factor to increase student cohort group size based on consistent and improved county health epidemiology factors. (Teachers and staff would still be required to maintain 6-foot distancing standard from students and adults)
- Adult-to-student and adult-to-adult social distancing standard remains 6 feet.
- Student-to-student social distancing standard may be 4-6 feet.

Component C: Pre-Pandemic Standards Past Practice

To be determined by consensus of the County Health Officer and County Superintendent of Schools following monthly check-ins.

- Full school occupancy and student/teacher distancing restrictions lifted based on the recension of state and county health orders.