NAPA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Napa County Office of Education

COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework for Napa County Schools

A collaborative resource created in partnership with Napa County Public Health, Calistoga Joint Unified School District, Howell Mountain Elementary School District, Napa Valley Unified School District, Pope Valley Union Elementary School District and St. Helena Unified School District

March 11, 2021

napacoe.org/ncoe-covid19-information/

NAPA COUNTY OFFICE
OF
EDUCATION

Introduction

From the time the COVID-19 pandemic closed our physical schools in March 2020, the goal in Napa County has been to return to in-person school instruction in compliance with state guidance and as soon as it was deemed safe to do so for both staff and students.

According to the California Department of Public Health, "Key mitigation strategies, studied in multiple settings and used successfully in schools nationally and internationally, allow for safe in-person instruction. The thoughtful implementation of mitigation strategies, specific to school context, provides a careful and effective pathway forward as community transmission rates fluctuate." At the federal level, researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published the results of their research in the Journal of the American Medical Association. "The preponderance of available evidence from the fall school semester has been reassuring. There has been little evidence that schools have contributed meaningfully to increased community transmission."

Following the COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California (January 14, 2021, CA Department of Public Health), and under the guidance of Napa County Public Health, our schools continue to move forward with expanding in-person instruction, while offering alternative remote instruction to some students as needed.

Napa County schools are following the CDPH guidance, informed by the California Blueprint for a Safer Economy, for safe reopening of schools in each Tier of the plan. All districts and private schools are complying with COVID-19 Safety Plan requirements. The Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Program and COVID-19 School Guidance Checklist can be located on the home page of each district's and private school's website. Labor organizations representing school and district staff have been a valuable partner in the development of COVID-19 safety plans and protocols.

Napa County educators are working tirelessly to provide students with the quality education they need to succeed. The great news? By working in partnership with Napa County Public Health and following all recommended mitigation strategies, our schools have proven to be safe environments for staff and students. We are especially proud of our educators here in Napa County who have made this possible through their dedication and the belief that the classroom is the best place for students to learn.
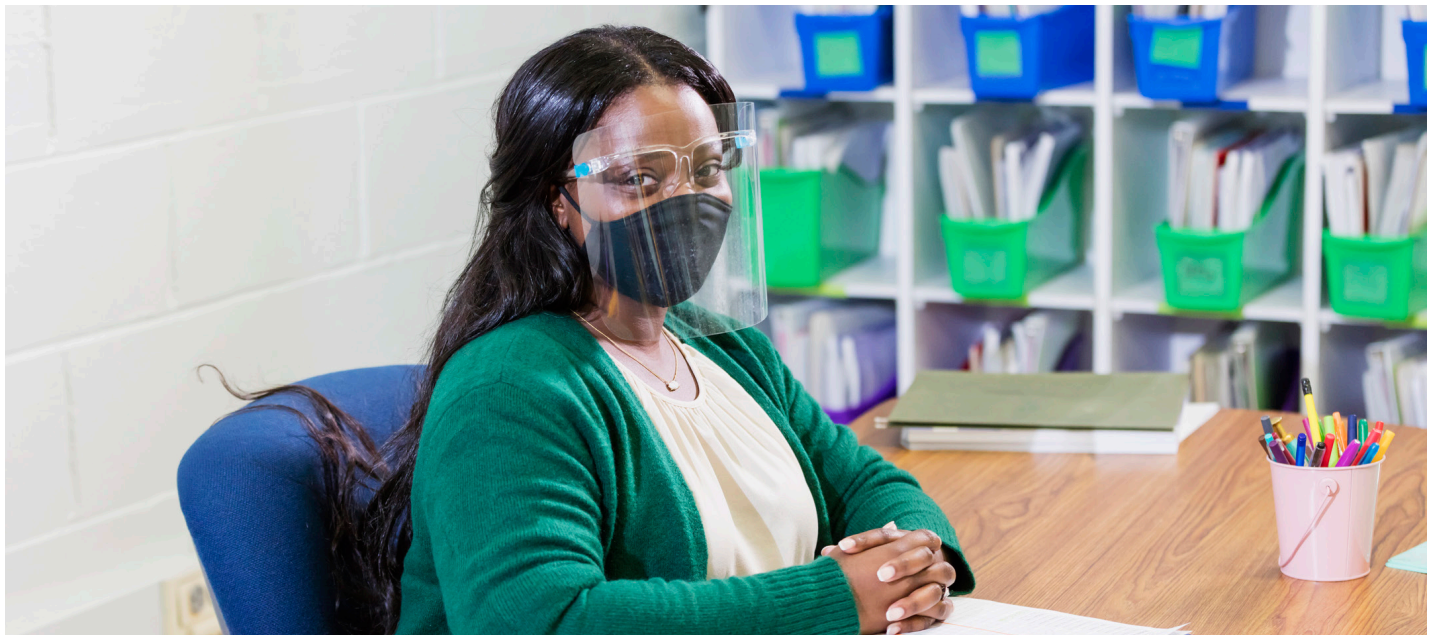
Sincerely,

Barbara Nemko

Barbara Nemko, Ph.D.
Napa County Superintendent of Schools
bnemko@napacoe.org, 707-253-6810

Acknowledgements
This document, provided by the Napa County Office of Education (NCOE), is a collection of considerations, ideas, information and guidelines to support Napa County school districts in developing plans for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance of the Napa County Department of Public Health, California Department of Public Health, California Department of Education and California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy have been essential in the development of this document. Our thanks to the Solano County Office of Education for providing their guide as the primary source document, and to the Alameda, Marin and Sonoma County Offices of Education and Santa Clara County Public Health for best practices.

Infection Mitigation Strategies

	CDPH California Department of Public Health
Face Coverings	▪ All staff and students (TK-12) are required to wear face coverings at all times, while at school, unless exempted.
	▪ Information contained in the CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings should be provided to staff and families of students. Information should also be provided to all staff and families in the school community on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
	▪ Teach and reinforce use of face coverings, or in limited instances, face shields with drapes. Training should also include policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a face covering will be addressed.
	▪ Students and staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.
	▪ Schools must develop protocols to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions.
	▪ Schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus because they will not wear a face covering
	▪ For additional guidance on the use of face coverings, and selecting the appropriate type of face covering, see CDPH guidance "Get the Most out of Masking".
Face Shield	▪ Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, as confirmed by school district health team and therapists, must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.
	▪ In limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (e.g., communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield with a drape (per CDPH guidelines) can be used instead of a face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others.
	▪ Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.

CDPH
California Department of Public Health

Stable Groups	

	▪ A stable group is a group with fixed membership that stays together without mixing with any other groups for any activities (previously referred to as "cohorts" or "pods"). For examples of Stable Group structures see CDPH Guidance "Stable Group Guidance Considerations by Grade Level".
	
	▪ **Elementary Stable Groups:**
	
	  ▪ Students can be placed into stable groups that stay together all day with their core teacher (and any aide or student teacher who is present). If there are counselors or teachers of electives, they should ideally be assigned to only one group or conduct their classes / counseling virtually.
	
	  ▪ Students should eat lunch and go to recess with their group at times that are staggered and separated from other groups.
	
	  ▪ Electives or counseling can be conducted virtually to limit the number of staff in direct contact with any given stable group.
	
	▪ **Secondary Stable Groups:**
	
	  ▪ Students can be placed into groups that remain together all day during in-person instruction.
	
	  ▪ The CDC guidance notes that schools may keep a single group together in one classroom and have educators rotate between groups, or have smaller groups move together in staggered passing schedules to other rooms they need to use (e.g., science labs) without allowing students or staff to mix with others from distinctive groups.
	
	  ▪ For additional examples of secondary Stable Group structures see CCEE Cohorts to Support Safe Learning.

Physical Distancing	▪ Prioritize the use and maximization of outdoor space for activities where possible. ▪ Maximize space between seating and desks. ▪ Distance teacher and other staff desks at least 6 feet away from student and other staff desks. ▪ Distance student chairs at least 6 feet away from one another, except where 6 feet of distance is not possible after a good-faith effort (See CDPH Guidance "Implementing Distancing Inside and Outside the Classroom" for more information see CDPH Guidance "Implementing Distancing Inside and Outside the Classroom" for more information. ▪ Under no circumstances should distance between student chairs be less than 4 feet. If 6 feet of distance is not possible, it is recommended to optimize ventilation and consider using other separation techniques such as partitions between students or desks, or arranging desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact. ▪ Short-term exposures of less than 6 feet between students and staff are permitted (e.g., a teacher assisting a student one-on-one), but the duration should be minimized and masks must be worn. ▪ Consider redesigning activities for smaller groups and rearranging furniture and play spaces to maintain separation. ▪ Staff should develop instructions for maximizing spacing and ways to minimize movement in both indoor and outdoor spaces that are easy for students to understand and are developmentally appropriate.

	CDPH California Department of Public Health
Adequate Ventilation	▪ Ensure sufficient ventilation in all school classrooms and shared workspaces per American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) guidance on ventilation. ▪ Contact a mechanical engineer, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) design professional, or mechanical contractor in order to evaluate your ventilation system in regards to the ASHRAE guidance. ▪ If opening windows poses a safety or health risk (e.g., by allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to persons in the facility, consider alternatives. ▪ Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in classrooms, offices and other spaces. ▪ If not able to properly ventilate indoor instructional spaces, outdoor instruction is preferred (use caution in poor air quality conditions). ▪ Ventilation considerations are also important on school buses; use open windows as much as possible to improve airflow.
Hand Hygiene	▪ Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff. ▪ Teach students and remind staff to use tissue to wipe their nose and to cough/sneeze into a tissue or their elbow. ▪ Students and staff should wash their hands frequently throughout the day, including before and after eating; after coughing or sneezing; after classes where they handle shared items, such as outside recreation, art, or shop; and before and after using the restroom. ▪ Students and staff should wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap, rubbing thoroughly after application. Soap products marketed as "antimicrobial" are not necessary or recommended. ▪ Students and staff should use fragrance-free hand sanitizer when handwashing is not practicable. Sanitizer must be rubbed into hands until completely dry. Note: frequent handwashing is more effective than the use of hand sanitizers. ▪ Ethyl alcohol-based hand sanitizers are preferred and should be used when there is the potential of unsupervised use by children. Isopropyl alcohol-based hand sanitizers are more toxic when ingested or absorbed into skin. Do not use hand sanitizers that may contain methanol which can be hazardous when ingested or absorbed. ▪ Children under age 9 should only use hand sanitizer under adult supervision. Call Poison Control if consumed: 1-800-222-1222.
Symptom Screening	▪ Actively encourage staff and students who are sick or who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 to stay home. Develop policies that encourage sick staff and students to stay at home without fear of reprisal, and ensure staff, students and students' families are aware of these policies. ▪ Implement symptom and exposure screening for all staff and students at home each day before leaving for school. ▪ Students or staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 at school (fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough, difficulty breathing, or other COVID-19 symptoms) must be immediately isolated in a private area until they can leave school or be picked up by a parent or guardian. ▪ Ill students and staff should be recommended to be tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible. ▪ Policies should not penalize students for missing class. ▪ Schools do not need to monitor compliance with home screening.

|	CDPH
	California Department of Public Health
Testing of Staff	All Napa County schools have an asymptomatic testing program that has been implemented to provide surveillance testing of staff. CDPH guidance recommends more frequent cadences under some circumstances, but at this time the increased frequency is not mandated. See CDPH Guidance "K-12 School Testing" for more information.

Source

COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework & Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year

Organizing Principles for Preventing COVID-19 Transmission by Age Group

Organizing Principle:
Stable Groups

Organizing Principle:
Physical Distancing & Face Coverings

Lower Elementary School	Upper Elementary School	Middle School/ Junior High School	High School
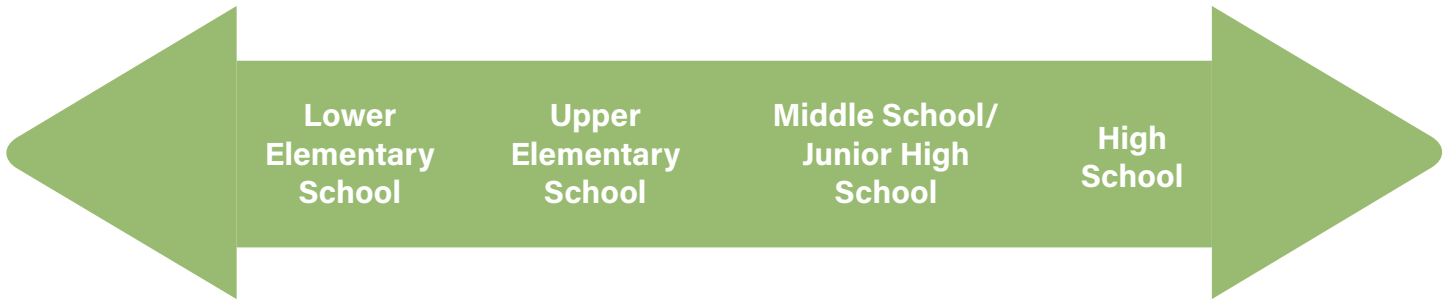
- Less feasible to limit close contact and wear face coverings
- More feasible to maintain stable groups
- Greater need for in-person and group-based instruction with close contact to support social-emotional and academic development

- More feasible to limit close contact and wear face coverings
- Less feasible to maintain stable groups
- Lesser need for in-person or group-based instruction with close contact to support social-emotional and academic development

Courtesy of Santa Clara County Department of Public Health

Requirements

Elementary Schools

- Ensure students and staff remain in stable classroom groups by keeping the same students and teacher or staff together for the entire school day. Students should not mix with other stable classroom groups. Students in all grade levels K-12 must wear face coverings.

Middle and High Schools

- Reduce disease transmission risk by maximizing the space between student desks and requiring face coverings.

All Schools

- Distance teacher and staff desks at least six feet away from students to minimize adult-to-child disease transmission.
- Assign stable seating arrangements for students to ensure that close contacts within classrooms are minimized and easily identifiable.
- Increase ventilation by increasing outdoor air circulation (e.g., by opening windows or using high-efficiency air filters and increasing ventilation rates.
- All staff are required to wear face coverings.

Implementing Physical Distancing

Arrival and Departure

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

- Minimize contact at school between students, staff, families and the community at the beginning and end of the school day. Prioritize minimizing contact between adults at all times.

- Stagger arrival and drop off-times and locations as consistently as practicable to minimize scheduling challenges for families.

- Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible. Put in place other protocols to limit direct contact between people as much as practicable.

- Ensure each school bus is equipped with extra unused face coverings for students who may have inadvertently failed to bring one.

Non-Classroom Spaces

- Limit nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving other groups at the same time. School tours are considered a non-essential activity.

- Limit communal activities. Alternatively, stagger use, properly space occupants and clean in between uses.

- Consider use of non-classroom space for instruction, including regular use of outdoor space, weather permitting. For example, consider part-day instruction outside.

- Minimize congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable. Schools can consider eliminating the use of lockers, which can become congregating areas.

- Serve meals outdoors or in classrooms instead of cafeterias or group dining rooms where practicable. Where cafeterias or group dining rooms must be used, keep students together in their stable groups, ensure physical distancing, hand hygiene before and after eating, and consider assigned seating. Serve individually plated or bagged meals.

- Consider holding recess activities in separated areas designated by group. If used, outdoor playgrounds/natural play areas only need routine maintenance. Make sure that children wash or sanitize their hands before and after using these spaces. When hand hygiene is emphasized, cleaning of outdoor structures play area is not required between cohorts.

Other Considerations:

- To the extent possible, schools should think about how to reconfigure the use of bell schedules to streamline foot traffic and maintain practicable physical distancing during passing times and at the beginning and end of the school day.

- Consider how to support inclusion and access for all student populations as you organize students for learning. The construction of stable groups can increase or decrease equity or segregation across the school campus.

- Elective teachers who move in and out of stable groups can become points of exposure for themselves and the students they work with. See CDPH Guidance "Stable Group Guidance Considerations by Grade Level".

Limit Sharing

- Consider suspending or modifying use of site resources that necessitate sharing or touching items.

- Limit use and sharing of objects and equipment, items such as electronic devices, clothing, toys, games, and art supplies to the extent practicable, or limit use of supplies and equipment to one group of children at a time and clean between uses. Cleaning shared objects between uses (for example with microfiber cloths or baby wipes) can help to physically remove germs on surfaces.

- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials.

- Keep each student's individual belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies or areas.
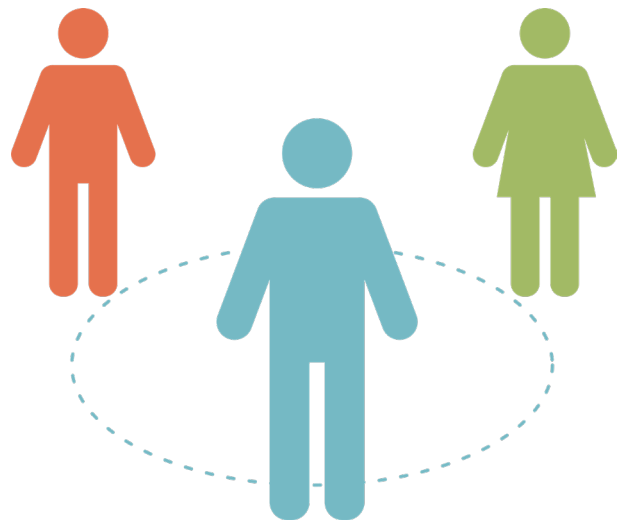
Staff to Staff Interactions

- Ensuring staff maintain physical distancing of six feet from each other is critical to reducing transmission between adults.

- Ensure that all staff use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines and Cal/OSHA standards.

- Support staff who are at higher risk for severe illness or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk, by providing options such as telework, where appropriate, or teaching in a distance learning context.

- Conduct all staff meetings, professional development training and education, and other activities involving staff with physical distancing measures in place, outside, or virtually, where physical distancing is a challenge.

- Minimize the use of and congregation of adults in staff rooms, break rooms, and other settings. Try to provide space outside whenever possible.

Student Activities

Events & Student Activities

Parent and student orientations, sports, cheerleading, club activities, etc. will be adjusted or canceled to comply with health order restrictions on mass gatherings. Gatherings in hallways and around locker rooms should be prevented and discouraged.

Before & After School Activities

Before and After School classroom activities should follow the same principles of physical distancing, frequent hand hygiene and face coverings that are implemented during school hours. Postponed activities should be avoided until state guidance permits these activities.

Essential Gatherings

Essential larger group gatherings of students, such as administration of SAT testing, will be allowed if it can be conducted with physical distancing and face coverings in rooms with sufficient ventilation.

School Athletics

School athletic activities and sports should follow the CDPH Outdoor and Indoor Youth and Adult Recreational Guidance. Note that risk of infection transmission increases for indoor activities; indoor sports are higher risk than outdoor sports due to reduced ventilation. And transmission risk increases with greater exertion levels; greater exertion increases the rate of breathing and the quantity of air that is inhaled and exhaled with every breath.

Band and Choir

Outdoor singing and band practice are permitted, provided that precautions such as physical distancing and mask wearing are implemented to the maximum extent possible. Playing of wind instruments (any instrument played by the mouth, such as a trumpet or clarinet) is strongly discouraged. School officials, staff, parents, and students should be aware of the increased likelihood for transmission from exhaled aerosols during singing and band practice, and physical distancing beyond 6 feet is strongly recommended for any of these activities.

Train All Staff and Educate Families

Train all staff and provide educational materials to families in the following safety actions. Consider conducting the training and education virtually, or, if in-person, outdoors, and ensure a minimum of six-foot distancing is maintained.

- Proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings.
- Physical distancing guidelines and their importance.
- Symptoms screening practices.
- COVID-19 specific symptom identification.
- How COVID-19 is spread.
- Enhanced sanitation practices.
- The importance of staff and students not coming to work they have symptoms, or if they or someone they live with or they have had close contact with has been diagnosed with COVID- 19.
- For staff, COVID-19 specific symptom identification and when to seek medical attention.

- The employer's plan and procedures to follow when staff or students become sick at school.
- The employer's plan and procedures to protect staff from COVID-19 illness.

Planning for Supplies

Schools should be well stocked with:
- **soap**
- **tissues**
- **no-touch trashcans**
- **face coverings**
- **hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol**

Each classroom should remain stocked with these supplies.

Cleaning & Disinfection

"Cleaning" involves water and soap or a detergent, does not use disinfecting agents, and significantly decreases germs on surfaces and decreases infectious risks.

"Disinfection" kills germs on surfaces using specific agents (see below for those approved for use). If a case has been identified, the spaces where the case spent a large proportion of their time should be disinfected. Frequent disinfection can pose a health risk to children and students due to the strong chemicals often used and so is not recommended in the school setting unless a case has been identified.

- Staff should clean frequently-touched surfaces at school and on school buses daily.
- Buses should be thoroughly cleaned daily and after transporting any individual who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Drivers should be provided cleaning materials, including but not limited to wipes and disposable gloves, to support cleaning of frequently touched surfaces during the day.

- Frequently touched surfaces in the school include, but are not limited to: Sink handles, door handles, shared tables, desks, chairs, Shared technology and supplies.
- If a school has morning and afternoon stable groups, the desks and tables are considered shared and should be cleaned before the next group arrives. Desks or chairs do not need daily cleaning if only used by one individual during the day.
- For more information on choosing and using disinfection products see CDPH Guidance "Cleaning and Disinfection".

Confirmed/Suspected COVID-19 Case Protocols for Schools

☑ Confirmed Positive Case

1. Schools must adhere to required reporting requirements and notify, as indicated, Napa County Public Health (NCPH) at 707.253.4540 of any newly reported case of COVID-19 in a student or staff member if NCPH has not yet contacted them about the case.

2. If the case is present at school at the time the school is notified, the case must go home and be excluded from school for at least 10 days from symptom onset date or, if asymptomatic, 10 days from the date the specimen was collected for the positive test.

3. Send a notice, developed in collaboration with NCPH, to parents and staff to inform them that a case of COVID-19 in a student or staff member has been reported and that the school will work with NCPH to notify exposed people. (sample letters)

4. Arrange for cleaning and disinfection of the classroom and primary spaces where case spent significant time (see CDPH Guidance "Cleaning and Disinfection"). This does not need to be done until students and staff in the area have left for the day.

5. Implement online/distance learning for student cases if they are well enough to participate.

School closure determinations should be made in consultation with NCPH (see CDPH Guidance "Confirmed COVID-19 Case/School Actions") A school with confirmed cases and even a small cluster of COVID-19 cases can remain open for in-person education as long as contact tracing identifies all school contacts for exclusion and testing in a timely manner, any small cluster is investigated and controlled rapidly, and NCPH agrees that the school can remain open.

1. NCPH will interview the case to identify the infectious period and whether case was infectious while at school.

2. It may be necessary to consider the entire class or members of the case's stable group exposed.

3. Notify the school COVID-19 coordinator to identify and generate a line list of close contacts at the school.

4. Notify all close contacts at the school and instruct them to follow CDPH COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance.

5. Recommend that all close contacts be tested. Contacts who test negative must still complete the required quarantine as defined in the CDPH guidance.

6. Contacts who test positive are required to isolate until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset; and at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and other symptoms have improved. If asymptomatic, cases should be isolated for 10 days after the specimen collection date of their positive test.

7. Investigate COVID-19 cases in school students and staff to determine if in-school transmission likely occurred and whether any school-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Assist schools to update protocols as needed to prevent additional cases.

❓ Suspected Case

- Identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits 1 or more symptoms of COVID-19 while at school.

- Staff and students should self-monitor throughout the day for signs of illness; staff should observe students for signs or symptoms of illness to support students who are less able to self-monitor or less likely to self-report.

- Any students or staff exhibiting 1 or more symptoms should be required to wait in the previously identified isolation area until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility, as soon as practicable.

- If a student is exhibiting 1 or more symptoms of COVID-19, staff should communicate with the parent/caregiver and refer to the student's health history form and/or emergency card.

- Unless NCPH recommends otherwise, there is no need to exclude asymptomatic contacts (students or staff) of the symptomatic individual from school until test results for the symptomatic individual are known.

If a student/staff member becomes ill (see pg. 13 for definition) at home, they should NOT come to school. Policies should encourage sick staff and students to stay at home. Ill students must continue to have access to instruction.

Recommended Health Self-Checker for Students

CDC Home-Based Symptom Screening

Caregivers: If your child has any of the following symptoms, they might have an illness they can spread to others.

Check your child for these symptoms before they go to school.

Check a symptom only if it has changed from usual or baseline health.

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Sore throat
- Cough (for students with chronic cough due to allergies or asthma, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Difficulty breathing (for students with asthma, a change from their baseline breathing)
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

If your child HAS any of the symptoms above:

- **Keep them home from school**
- **Consider whether your child needs to see a healthcare provider and possible COVID-19 testing.** CDC has a Coronavirus Self Checker available on its website, which may help you make decisions about seeking medical care for possible COVID-19
- **Contact your child's school and report that your child is sick.** The school may ask some additional questions to help determine when it is safe for your child to return to school.

If your child does NOT have any of the symptoms above:

- Send them to school as usual.

If you develop symptoms while at school tell your teacher or administrator immediately.

Source
CDC Screening K-12 Students for Symptoms of COVID-19

What to do if there is a Confirmed or Suspected Case of COVID-19 in a School

What measures should be taken when a student, teacher or staff member has symptoms, is a contact of someone infected, or is diagnosed with COVID-19? Source: CDPH Guidance "What to do if there is a Confirmed or Suspected Case of COVID-19 in a School".

Actions to take if there is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in a school

	Student or Staff with:	Action	Communication
1	COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, loss of taste or smell, difficulty breathing) Symptom screening: per CDC Symptom of COVID-19.	▪ Send home if at school. ▪ Recommend testing (If positive, see #3, if negative, see #4). ▪ If symptomatic student is not tested exclude from school for 10 days ▪ School/classroom remain open.	No action needed.

2	Close contact (†) with a confirmed COVID-19 case	▪ Send home if at school.
		▪ Exclude from school for 10 days from last exposure, per CDPH quarantine recommendations.
		▪ Recommend testing 5-7 days from last exposure (but will not shorten 10-day exclusion if negative).
		▪ Vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:
		  - Are fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine)
		  - Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure
		▪ School/classroom remain open.
			Consider school community notification of a known exposure. No action needed if exposure did not happen in school setting.

3	Confirmed COVID- 19 case infection.	▪ Notify NCPH. ▪ Exclude from school for 10 days from symptom onset date or, if asymptomatic, for 10 days from specimen collection date. ▪ Identify school contacts (†), inform NCPH of identified contacts, (possibly the entire stable group (††)) from school for 10 days after the last date the case was present at school while infectious. ▪ Recommend testing asymptomatic contacts 5-7 days from last exposure and immediate testing of symptomatic contacts (negative test results will not shorten 10-day exclusion). ▪ Disinfection and cleaning of classroom and primary spaces where case spent significant time. ▪ School remains open.	School community notification of a known case. Notification of persons with potential exposure if case was present in school while infectious

Actions to take if there is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in a school

Student or Staff with:	Action	Communication
4 Symptomatic person tests negative or a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying condition, or at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.	▪ May return to school after 24 hours have passed without fever and symptoms have started improving. ▪ School/classroom remain open.	Consider school community notification if prior awareness of testing.

(†) A contact is defined as a person who is within 6 feet from a case for more than 15 minutes cumulative within a 24-hour period, regardless of face coverings. In some school situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire stable group, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed, particularly if people have spent time together indoors.

(††) See Stable Group Guidance for definition of a stable group. In some situations, (e.g., when seating charts are used, face covering is well adhered to, and teachers or staff have observed students adequately throughout the day), contact tracing and investigation may be able to determine more precisely whether each stable group member has been exposed. In this situation, those who were not close contacts could continue with in-person instruction.

School Closure Determinations

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

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

CDPH defines a school outbreak as 3 or more confirmed or probable cases of staff or students occurring within a 14-day period who are epidemiologically linked in the school, are from different households and are not contacts of each other in any other investigation cases (e.g., transmission likely occurred in the school setting).

Situations that may indicate the need for school closure:

- Within a 14-day period, an outbreak has occurred in 25% or more stable groups in the school.
- Within a 14-day period, at least three outbreaks have occurred in the school AND more than 5% of the school population is infected.
- A school district should close if 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19 within a 14-day period and in consultation with NCPH.

Length of closure is 14 days, or according to a decision made in consultation with NCPH. NCPH may also determine school closure is warranted for other reasons, including results from public health investigation or other local epidemiological data.

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

When to Reopen a Class/Group/School/District

Schools may typically reopen after 14 days and if the following have occurred:

- ☑ Cleaning and disinfection
- ☑ Public health investigation
- ☑ Consultation with NCPH