



COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Schools and School- Based Programs

Updated: **August 3, 2020**

All guidance should be implemented only with local health officer approval following their review of local epidemiological data including cases per 100,000 population, rate of test positivity, and local preparedness to support a health care surge, vulnerable populations, contact tracing, and testing.



OVERVIEW

Communities across the state are preparing for the forthcoming school year. To assist with that planning process, the following guidelines and considerations are intended to help school and community leaders plan and prepare to resume in-person instruction.

This guidance is interim and subject to updates. These guidelines and considerations are based on the best available public health data at this time, international best practices currently employed, and the practical realities of managing school operations; as new data and practices emerge. Additionally, the guidelines and considerations do not reflect the full scope of issues that school communities will need to address, which range from day-to-day site-based logistics to the social and emotional well-being of students and staff.

California public schools (traditional and charter), private schools (including nonpublic nonsectarian schools), school districts, and county offices of education, herein referred to as schools, will determine the most appropriate instructional model, taking into account the needs of their students and staff, and their available infrastructure. This guidance is not intended to prevent a school from adopting a distance learning, hybrid, or mixed-delivery instructional model to ensure safety. Schools are not required to seek out or receive approval from a state or local public health officer prior to adopting a distance-learning model.

Implementation of this guidance will depend on local public health conditions, including those listed [here](#). Communities meeting those criteria, such as lower incidence of COVID-19 and adequate preparedness, may implement the guidance described below as part of a phased reopening. All decisions about following this guidance should be made in collaboration with local health officials and other authorities.

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 engage relevant stakeholders—including families, staff and labor partners in the school community—to formulate and implement plans that consider the following:

- **Student, Family and Staff Population:** Who are the student, family and staff populations who 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?

This guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any worker rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any existing safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA. Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues.



1. General Measures

- Establish and continue communication with local and State authorities to determine current disease levels and control measures in your community. For example:
 - Review and refer to, if applicable, the relevant county variance documentation. Documentation can be found [here](#).
 - Consult with your county health officer, or designated staff, who are best positioned to monitor and provide advice on local conditions. A directory can be found [here](#).
 - Collaborate with other schools and school partners in your region, including the county office of education.
 - Regularly review updated guidance from state agencies, including the [California Department of Public Health](#) and [California Department of Education](#).
- Establish a written, worksite-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every facility, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas and work tasks, and designate a person at each school to implement the plan.
 - Identify contact information for the local health department where the school is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among students or staff.
 - Incorporate the [CDPH Guidance](#) for the Use of Face Coverings, into the School Site Specific Plan that includes a policy for handling exemptions.
 - Train and communicate with workers and worker representatives on the plan. Make the written plan available and accessible to workers and worker representatives.
 - Regularly evaluate the workplace for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
 - Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
 - Implement the necessary processes and protocols when a workplace has an outbreak, in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#).
 - Identify individuals who have been in close contact (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected person and take steps to isolate

COVID-19 positive person(s) and close contacts. See Section 10 for more detail.

- Adhere to these guidelines. Failure to do so could result in workplace illnesses that may cause classrooms or the entire school to be temporarily closed or limited.
- Evaluate whether and to what extent external community organizations can safely utilize the site and campus resources. Ensure external community organizations that use the facilities also follow this guidance.
- 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. See Section 10 below.
- Develop a plan to further support students with access and functional needs who may be at increased risk of becoming infected or having unrecognized illness due to COVID-19. For example, review existing student health plans to identify students who may need additional accommodations, develop a process for engaging families for potentially unknown concerns that may need to be accommodated or identify additional preparations for classroom and non-classroom environments as needed. Groups who might be at increased risk of becoming infected or having unrecognized illness include the following:
 - Individuals who have limited mobility or require prolonged and close contact with others, such as direct support providers and family members;
 - Individuals who have trouble understanding information or practicing preventive measures, such as hand washing and physical distancing; and
 - Individuals who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness.
- Schools should review the [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) and any applicable local health department guidance and incorporate face-covering use for students and workers into their COVID-19 prevention plan. Some flexibility may be needed for younger children consistent with child development recommendations. See Section 3 for more information.



2. Promote Healthy Hygiene Practices

- 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 inside 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.
 - Staff should model and practice handwashing. For example, for lower grade levels, use bathroom time as an opportunity to reinforce healthy habits and monitor proper handwashing.
 - Students and staff should use fragrance-free hand sanitizer when handwashing is not practicable. Sanitizer must be rubbed into hands until completely dry. Note: frequent handwashing is more effective than the use of hand sanitizers.
 - Ethyl alcohol-based hand sanitizers are preferred and should be used when there is the potential of unsupervised use by children.
 - Isopropyl hand sanitizers are more toxic when ingested or absorbed in skin.
 - Do not use hand sanitizers that may [contain methanol](#) which can be hazardous when ingested or absorbed.
 - Children under age 9 should only use hand sanitizer under adult supervision. Call Poison Control if consumed: 1-800-222-1222.
- Consider portable handwashing stations throughout a site and near classrooms to minimize movement and congregations in bathrooms to the extent practicable.
- Develop routines enabling students and staff to regularly wash their hands at staggered intervals.
- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, no-touch trashcans, face coverings, and hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer.

- Information contained in the [CDPH Guidance](#) for the Use of Face Coverings should be provided to staff and families, which discusses the circumstances in which face coverings must be worn and the exemptions, as well as any policies, work rules, and practices the employer has adopted to ensure the use of face coverings.
- Employers must provide and ensure staff use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines and all required protective equipment.
- The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) and the Department of Public Health (CDPH) are and will be working to support procurement and distribution of face coverings and personal protective equipment. Additional information can be found [here](#).
- Strongly recommend that all students and staff be immunized each autumn against influenza unless contraindicated by personal medical conditions, to help:
 - Protect the school community
 - Reduce demands on health care facilities
 - Decrease illnesses that cannot be readily distinguished from COVID-19 and would therefore trigger extensive measures from the school and public health authorities.
- Nothing in this guidance should be interpreted as restricting access to appropriate educational services.



3. Face Coverings

Face coverings must be used in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#) unless a person is exempt as explained in the guidelines, particularly in indoor environments, on school buses, and areas where physical distancing alone is not sufficient to prevent disease transmission.

- Teach and reinforce use of [face coverings](#), or in limited instances, face shields.
- Students and staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to [wash their hands](#) frequently.
- Information should be provided to all staff and families in the school community on [proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings](#).
- Training should also include policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a face covering will be addressed.

STUDENTS

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

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

- Persons younger than two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, anyone who is unconscious or incapacitated, and anyone who is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance are exempt from wearing a face covering.
- A cloth face covering or face shield should be removed for meals, snacks, naptime, or outdoor recreation, or when it needs to be replaced. When a cloth face covering is temporarily removed, it should be placed in a clean paper bag (marked with the student's name and date) until it needs to be put on again.
- In order to comply with this guidance, schools must exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one provided by the school. Schools should develop protocols to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions. Schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus.

STAFF

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

- Workers or other persons handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to face coverings. Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.



4. Ensure Teacher and Staff Safety

- Ensuring staff maintain physical distancing 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 virtual learning or independent study context.
- Conduct all staff meetings, professional development training and education, and other activities involving staff with physical distancing measures in place, or virtually, where physical distancing is a challenge.
- Minimize the use of and congregation of adults in staff rooms, break rooms, and other settings.
- Implement procedures for daily symptom monitoring for staff.



5. Intensify Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation

- Consider suspending or modifying use of site resources that necessitate sharing or touching items. For example, consider suspending use of drinking fountains and instead encourage the use of reusable water bottles.
- Staff should [clean and disinfect](#) frequently-touched surfaces at school and on school buses at least daily and, as practicable, these surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day by trained custodial staff.
- Buses should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily and after transporting any individual who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Drivers should be provided disinfectant wipes and disposable gloves to support disinfection of frequently touched surfaces during the day.

- Frequently touched surfaces in the school include, but are not limited to:
 - Door handles
 - Light switches
 - Sink handles
 - Bathroom surfaces
 - Tables
 - Student Desks
 - Chairs
- Limit use and sharing of objects and equipment, such as toys, games, art supplies and playground equipment to the extent practicable. When shared use is allowed, clean and disinfect between uses.
- When choosing disinfecting products, use those approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved list "N"](#) and follow product instructions.
 - To [reduce the risk of asthma](#) and other health effects related to disinfecting, programs should select disinfectant products on list N with asthma-safer ingredients (hydrogen peroxide, citric acid or lactic acid) as recommended by the US EPA Design for Environment program.
 - Avoid products that contain peroxyacetic (peracetic) acid, sodium hypochlorite (bleach) or quaternary ammonium compounds, which can cause asthma.
 - Follow label directions for appropriate dilution rates and contact times. Provide workers training on the chemical hazards, manufacturer's directions, Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use, and as applicable and as required by the Healthy Schools Act.
 - Custodial staff and any other workers who clean and disinfect the school site must be equipped with proper protective equipment, including gloves, eye protection, respiratory protection, and other appropriate protective equipment as required by the product instructions. All products must be kept out of children's reach and stored in a space with restricted access.
 - Establish a cleaning and disinfecting schedule in order to avoid both under- and over-use of cleaning products.
- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectant and keep products away from students.

- Ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting. Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible, for example, by opening windows where practicable. When cleaning, air out the space before children arrive; plan to do thorough cleaning when children are not present. If using air conditioning, use the setting that brings in outside air. Replace and check air filters and filtration systems to ensure optimal air quality.
 - If opening windows poses a safety or health risk (e.g., by allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to persons using the facility, consider alternatives. For example, maximize central air filtration for HVAC systems (targeted filter rating of at least MERV 13).
- 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.
- [Take steps](#) to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, drinking fountains and decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#) and other diseases associated with water.



6. Implementing Distancing Inside and Outside the Classroom



Arrival and Departure

- Maximize space between students and between students and the driver on school buses and open windows to the greatest extent practicable.
- Minimize contact at school between students, staff, families and the community at the beginning and end of the school day. Prioritize minimizing contact between adults at all times.
- Stagger arrival and drop off-times and locations as consistently as practicable as to minimize scheduling challenges for families.
- Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible. Put in place other protocols to limit direct contact with others as much as practicable.
- Implement health screenings of students and staff upon arrival at school (see Section 9).
- Ensure each bus is equipped with extra unused face coverings on school buses for students who may have inadvertently failed to bring one.



Classroom Space

- To reduce possibilities for infection, students must remain in the same space and in cohorts as small and consistent as practicable, including for recess and lunch. Keep the same students and teacher or staff with each group, to the greatest extent practicable.
- Prioritize the use and maximization of outdoor space for activities where practicable.
- Minimize movement of students and teachers or staff as much as practicable. For example, consider ways to keep teachers with one group of students for the whole day. In secondary schools or in situations where students have individualized schedules, plan for ways to reduce mixing among cohorts and to minimize contact.
- Maximize space between seating and desks. Distance teacher and other staff desks at least six feet away from student desks. Consider ways to establish separation of students through other means if practicable, such as, six feet between desks, where practicable, partitions between desks, markings on classroom floors to promote distancing or arranging desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.
- 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.
- Activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets such as band and choir practice and performances are not permitted.
- Activities that involve singing must only take place outdoors.
- Implement procedures for turning in assignments to minimize contact.
- Consider using privacy boards or clear screens to increase and enforce separation between staff and students.



Non-Classroom Spaces

- Limit nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving other groups at the same time.
- Limit communal activities where practicable. Alternatively, stagger use, properly space occupants and disinfect in between uses.
- Consider use of non-classroom space for instruction, including regular use of outdoor space, weather permitting. For example, consider part-day instruction outside.
- Minimize congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable. For example, establish more ways to enter and exit a campus, create staggered passing times when necessary or when students cannot stay in one room and create guidelines on the floor that students can follow to enable physical distancing while passing. In addition, schools can consider eliminating the use of lockers and moving to block scheduling, which supports the creation of cohort groups and reduces changes of classrooms.
- 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 cohort groups, ensure physical distancing, and consider assigned seating. Serve individually plated or bagged meals. Avoid sharing of foods and utensils and buffet or family-style meals.
- Consider holding recess activities in separated areas designated by class.



Sports and Extra Curricular Activities (Updated August 3, 2020)

- Outdoor and indoor sporting events, assemblies, dances, rallies, field trips, and other activities that require close contact or that would promote congregating are not permitted at this time. For example, tournaments, events, or competitions, regardless of whether teams are from the same school or from different schools, counties, or states are not permitted at this time.
- Youth sports and physical education are permitted only when the following can be maintained: (1) physical distancing of at least six feet; and (2) a stable cohort, such as a class, that limits the risks of transmission (see [CDC Guidance on Schools and Cohorting](#)). Activities should take place outside to the maximum extent practicable.

- For sports that cannot be conducted with sufficient distancing or cohorting, only physical conditioning and training is permitted and ONLY where physical distancing can be maintained. Conditioning and training should focus on individual skill building (e.g., running drills and body weight resistance training) and should take place outside, where practicable. Indoor physical conditioning and training is allowed only in counties where gyms and fitness centers are allowed to operate indoors.
- Avoid equipment sharing, and if unavoidable, clean and disinfect shared equipment between use by different people to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.
- Consistent with guidance for gyms and fitness facilities, cloth face coverings must be worn during indoor physical conditioning and training or physical education classes (except when showering). Activities that require heavy exertion should be conducted outside in a physically distanced manner without face coverings. Activities conducted inside should be those that do not require heavy exertion and can be done with a face covering. Players should take a break from exercise if any difficulty in breathing is noted and should change their mask or face covering if it becomes wet and sticks to the player's face and obstructs breathing. Masks that restrict airflow under heavy exertion (such as N-95 masks) are not advised for exercise.
- Youth sports programs and schools should provide information to parents or guardians regarding this and related guidance, along with the safety measures that will be in place in these settings with which parents or guardians must comply.
- Activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets such as band and choir practice and performances are not permitted.



7. Limit Sharing

- Keep each child's belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies or areas. Ensure belongings are taken home each day to be cleaned.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials (art supplies, equipment, etc.) to the extent practicable or limit use of supplies and equipment to one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between uses.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, clothing, toys, books and other games or learning aids as much as practicable. Where sharing occurs, clean and disinfect between uses.



8. Train All Staff and Educate Families

- Train all staff and provide educational materials to families in the following safety actions:
 - Enhanced sanitation practices
 - Physical distancing guidelines and their importance
 - [Proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings](#)
 - Screening practices
 - How COVID-19 is spread
 - COVID-19 specific [symptom](#) identification
 - Preventing the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick, including the importance of not coming to work if staff members have symptoms, or if they or someone they live with has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
 - For workers, COVID-19 specific [symptom](#) identification and when to seek medical attention
 - The employer's plan and procedures to follow when children or adults become sick at school.
 - The employer's plan and procedures to protect workers from COVID-19 illness.
- Consider conducting the training and education virtually, or, if in-person, ensure a minimum of six-foot distancing is maintained.



9. Check for Signs and Symptoms

- Prevent discrimination against students who (or whose families) were or are diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are perceived to be a COVID-19 risk.
- 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 screening and other procedures for all staff and students entering the facility.

- Conduct visual wellness checks of all students or establish procedures for parents to monitor at home. If checking temperatures, use a no-touch thermometer.
- Ask all individuals if they or anyone in their home is exhibiting [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Make available and encourage use of hand-washing stations or hand sanitizer.
- Document/track incidents of possible exposure and notify local health officials, staff and families immediately of any exposure to a positive case of COVID-19 at school while maintaining confidentiality, as required under FERPA and state law related to privacy of educational records. Additional guidance can be found [here](#). As noted in Section 11 below, the staff liaison can serve a coordinating role to ensure prompt and responsible notification.
- If a student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, staff should communicate with the parent/caregiver and refer to the student's health history form and/or emergency card.
- Monitor staff and students throughout the day for signs of illness; send home students and staff with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough or other [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Policies should not penalize students and families for missing class.



10. Plan for When a Staff Member, Child or Visitor Becomes Sick

- 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, as soon as practicable.
- Establish procedures to arrange for safe transport home or to a healthcare facility, as appropriate, when an individual is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - New loss of taste or smell
- For serious injury or illness, call 9-1-1 without delay. Seek medical attention if COVID-19 symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).
 - Notify local health officials immediately of any positive case of COVID-19, and exposed staff and families as relevant while maintaining confidentiality as required by state and federal laws. Additional guidance can be found [here](#).
 - Close off areas used by any individual suspected of being infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. To reduce risk of exposure, wait 24 hours before you [clean and disinfect](#). If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as practicable. Ensure a [safe and correct application](#) of disinfectants using personal protective equipment and ventilation recommended for cleaning. Keep disinfectant products away from students.
 - Advise sick staff members and students not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue [home isolation](#), including at least 3 days with no fever, symptoms have improved and at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared.
 - Ensure that students, including students with disabilities, have access to instruction when out of class, as required by federal and state law.
 - Schools should offer distance learning based on the unique circumstances of each student who would be put at-risk by an in-person instructional model. For example, students with a health condition, students with family members with a health condition, students who cohabituate or regularly interact with high-risk individuals, or are otherwise identified as “at-risk” by the parents or guardian, are students whose circumstances merit offering distance learning.

- Implement the necessary processes and protocols when a school has an outbreak, in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#).
- Investigate the COVID-19 illness and exposures and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update protocols as needed to prevent further cases.
- Update protocols as needed to prevent further cases. See the CDPH guidelines, [Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace](#), which are incorporated into this guidance and contain detailed recommendations for establishing a plan to identify cases, communicating with workers and other exposed persons, and conducting and assisting with contact tracing.



11. Maintain Healthy Operations

- Monitor staff absenteeism and have a roster of trained back-up staff where available.
- Monitor the types of illnesses and symptoms among your students and staff to help isolate them promptly as needed.
- Designate a staff liaison or liaisons to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Workers should know who they are and how to contact them. The liaison should be trained to coordinate the documentation and tracking of possible exposure, in order to notify local health officials, staff and families in a prompt and responsible manner.
- Maintain communication systems that allow staff and families to self-report symptoms and receive prompt notifications of exposures and closures, while maintaining confidentiality, as required by FERPA and state law related to privacy of educational records. Additional guidance can be found [here](#).
- Consult with local health departments if routine testing is being considered by a local educational agency. The role of providing routine systematic testing of staff or students for COVID-19 (e.g., PCR swab testing for acute infection, or presence of antibodies in serum after infection) is currently unclear.
- Support students who are at higher risk for severe illness or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk, by providing options such as virtual learning or independent study.



12. Considerations for Reopening and Partial or Total Closures

California schools have been closed for in-person instruction since mid-March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. School closures to in-person instruction were part of a broader set of recommendations intended to reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. For more detailed direction on measures to be taken when a student, teacher, or staff member has symptoms or is diagnosed with COVID-19, please see the [COVID-19 and Reopening Framework for K-12 Schools in California](#).

- Check State and local orders and health department notices daily about transmission in the area or closures and adjust operations accordingly.
- When a student, teacher or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and had exposed others at the school, refer to the [CDPH Framework for K-12 Schools](#), and implement the following steps:
 - In consultation with the local public health department, the appropriate school official should ensure cleaning and quarantine of exposed persons and whether any additional intervention is warranted, including the length of time necessary, based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.
 - Close off the classroom or office where the patient was based and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfection. Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait for at least two hours and as long as possible.
 - Additional areas of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual may also need to be cleaned and disinfected.
 - Implement communication plans for exposure at school and potential school closures to include outreach to students, parents, teachers, staff and the community.
 - Include information for staff regarding labor laws, information regarding Disability Insurance, Paid Family Leave and Unemployment Insurance, as applicable to schools. See additional [information on government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including worker's sick leave rights under [the Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the [Governor's Executive Order N-62-20](#), while that Order is in effect.
 - 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.

