

Welcome back to the 2021-22 school year. We are so excited to see our students returning and we look forward to many great experiences in the year ahead!

Returning to School

When students are welcomed onto campus this year, things will look different. Our school site has been modifying our day-to-day practices and school operations to limit staff and student exposure to COVID-19 in accordance with the latest state health requirements and recommendations. The newest state guidance was released on July 12, 2021 and can be viewed at the following website:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/K-12-Guidance-2021-22-School-Year.aspx#>

Please talk to your children about these changes. The goal of the revised rules are to keep everyone safe while allowing all children to continue to attend school in person.

Below, I've outlined some key information about our current practices for the upcoming year:

Cleaning

Classrooms and common areas will be cleaned daily with particular attention paid to high-touch areas. Facilities and equipment will be disinfected if an individual who contracts COVID-19 has been in the area within 24 hours. Employees have been provided cleaner to use in their areas, as necessary.

Hygiene

At our school, hand hygiene will continue to play an important role in the coming year. Staff and students are trained on proper hand hygiene, including hand washing and use of hand sanitizer. Handwashing/sanitizing will be reinforced daily with time allotted to wash hands regularly.

Physical Distancing

Per current guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), "In-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented." Even though the state and local guidelines do not require physical distancing, we will still encourage students to remain as distanced from each other, as possible. In classrooms and at lunch, students are generally at least 3 feet away from each other.

Masks and Face Coverings

Per the state health rules, masks are optional outdoors for everyone at school. Masks are required indoors for everyone at school (unless there is a valid medical exemption issued by a doctor). People with a valid medical exemption from wearing a face covering must wear a nonrestrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge (as long as their condition permits it). Schools will provide a face covering to students who do not bring one to school. We are asking that all students bring their own mask to school.

Health Screenings

Families should conduct health screenings for their children before leaving for school each morning. This could include assessing for symptoms consistent with COVID-19, and asking your child, "Do you feel well today?"

Temperature checks or health screenings will not be conducted as students enter the school. Staff members will monitor student health throughout the day and a health assessment will be conducted if a child appears to not feel well or develops symptoms while at school.

Following local guidelines, any student or staff exhibiting a fever or any of the COVID-19 symptoms will be immediately sent home. Health guidance also requires that if anyone in a student or staff member's household has tested positive for COVID-19, all household members and non-immune close contacts of the individual be required to quarantine at home for a specified period of time (based on their last known contact with the individual, and the individual's ability to meet requirements for returning to work or school). If someone in your household has tested positive for COVID-19, please contact the school office for further instructions.

Other Safety Measures

- Drinking fountains are disabled. Students may bring their own water bottles and may refill their bottles at designated sinks on campus or use provided cups.
- Bathrooms are cleaned and stocked with soap throughout the day.
- HVAC systems have been serviced to maximize ventilation and air exchange with our facilities and air purifiers have been deployed in classrooms that require more ventilation.

Child Nutrition and Meal Services

Meals for breakfast and lunch are free to all students in the 2021-22 school year. At breakfast, students may choose from one entree, fruit or juice and one milk. At lunch, students may choose one entree, choice of fruits and vegetables from the salad bar and one milk.

Of course, students are welcome to bring lunch from home, but we want to encourage everyone to participate in our meal service program. We receive funding for all students that participate in our free meal program, regardless of need.

In-Person Learning

School will resume as full-time, in-person learning this year. If you have reservations about returning to school in person, whether you have ongoing safety concerns about COVID-19 or whether you have concerns with the state mask requirement, please know that you have the option to enroll in the district's independent study program, Trust Blended Learning. You can learn more about Trust here: <https://www.lmsvschools.org/trust/>

I hope that this information provides you with a snapshot of our school's health practices in 2021-22, which may be subject to change based on evolving guidelines from our state and local agencies. We look forward to working with you and your students in the coming year.

Sincerely,
Angelo Benedetto
Principal
Sweetwater Springs Elementary School

New Quarantine Guidelines for COVID Close Contacts Quick Reference Guide

Quarantine guidance has changed for individuals who are close contacts of an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 in school. Specifically, it allows for students exposed to COVID-19 during a time on campus when both parties were masked to remain on campus, if mitigation strategies are followed. It is mandatory for students and staff to wear masks indoors, in accordance with state guidance.

Below you will find the most recent CDPH and County of San Diego Health and Human Services guidance on quarantining and isolation:

Exposure When Both Parties Were Wearing Masks In School

- When both parties wore a mask in the school indoor setting, unvaccinated students who were close contacts (more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 0-6 feet indoors) may undergo a modified 10-day quarantine. They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:
 - Are asymptomatic;
 - Continue to appropriately mask (when around others);
 - Undergo at least twice weekly testing during the 10-day quarantine; and
 - Quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting. This does not include Extended School Services (ESS); students may continue to attend ESS during a modified quarantine.

Exposure When At Least One Party Was Unmasked During School

Additional guidance requires that if either or both individuals were unmasked (indoors or outdoors) during exposure, they are required to quarantine (except in the case of vaccinated students or those who are immune by recovering from COVID-19 within the last 90 days).

- For these contacts, those who remain asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue self-quarantine under the following conditions:
 - Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.
 - The standard quarantine duration for the 2021-22 school year is 10 days. In accordance with guidance, to discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close contacts who return on Day 11 must:
 - Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND
 - Follow all recommended safety measures (e.g., wearing a mask when around others, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure.
 - If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care.
- These quarantining guidelines can also apply to individuals who were masked during their exposure period if they do not wish to undergo modified quarantine (which includes bi-weekly testing).

Isolation Guidelines for Sick or COVID-19 Positive Individuals Quick Reference Guide

The following guidance has not changed since the 2021-22 school year.

My child is sick and does not take a COVID-19 test

If your child gets sick and you or your healthcare provider decides not to have them get a polymerase chain reaction (PCR/NAAT) to determine if they have COVID, they may return when:

- It is at least 10 days from their symptom onset and
- They are without a fever for 24 hours with no fever reducing medication and
- Their symptoms are improving.

My child is sick and/or tests positive with the COVID-19 virus

If your child tests positive for COVID-19 through either PCR (NAAT) Test or antigen test, they may return when:

- It is at least 10 days from their symptom onset or the date they tested positive if asymptomatic and
- They are without a fever for 24 hours with no fever reducing medication and
- Their symptoms are improving.

My child is sick and tests negative for the COVID-19 virus

If your child gets sick and tests negative for COVID-19 through a PCR (NAAT) Test, they may return when:

- They are without a fever for 24 hours with no fever reducing medication and
- Their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours and
- They provide proof of the negative PCR test results to the school site.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Negative Antigen tests are not accepted. Currently, San Diego County only accepts negative PCR (NAAT) Tests for return to work/school. It is recommended that parents choose to get a PCR (NAAT) Test for their children, to prevent having to retest. Parents can use the testing available through the District to meet these requirements.

My child has symptoms that are a result of a chronic pre-existing condition

If your child has a pre-existing condition, which has previously been reported to the school, call the school nurse for further directions.

- Students who have a pre-existing condition may return to school with a note from their healthcare provider. The note MUST:
- Be signed by a licensed MD/DO/NP/PA who manages the condition.
- Confirm the chronic diagnosis (cite labs, date of record when diagnosed with the condition, etc.).
- Include the provider's contact information.
- Explain how the symptoms are unrelated to COVID-19.
- Be reviewed and approved by a school district nurse.