



July 27, 2021

Dear LMSV Families

As we look forward to the upcoming school year, you may have questions about California's newly released school health requirements and what they will mean for our students. Since there has been so much conflicting information in the news, we wanted to get an update out to our families sooner than later.

In order to ensure that schools can fully reopen, the two most restrictive prevention measures included in last year's guidance, physical distancing and universal cohort groups, are no longer required. The elimination of these measures will allow our schools to open for full-time, in-person instruction on August 11 as planned.

There are also new measures that will reduce, and in some cases eliminate required quarantines when masks are worn indoors. This will allow us to avoid sending full classrooms of healthy students home for 10-14 days because of state quarantine requirements. This quarantine exception is dependent on indoor mask requirements.

Finally, as mentioned above, masks are required indoors at school for all students and adults regardless of vaccination status (unless there is a valid medical exemption). However, masks are now optional outdoors.

We understand that some feel the mask requirement is unnecessary, while some feel the guidance does not go far enough. Despite the fact that news reports have implied that districts have the discretion to make masks optional, this is not the case. Specifically, the State of California has issued the following mask requirements in schools:

- All students and adults are required to wear masks in classrooms, regardless of vaccination status (unless there is a valid medical exemption).
- Masks are *optional outdoors* for all in K-12 school settings.
- Schools must enforce the mask requirement.

County and state health officials have confirmed that all school districts must comply with the guidance for schools included in the [State Public Health Officer Order of June 11, 2021](#), which derives its authority from Health and Safety Codes 120125, 120140, 120175, 120195 and 131080 and other applicable laws. As a public entity, the [San Diego County public health order](#) includes a similar requirement.

It is important to understand that the state has not given schools the discretion to make masks optional or to create their own standard for enforcement. We are required to enforce the state mandate, as we would with any other state law, regulation, or policy.

You can read the new state health requirements here: [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year](#)

You can also read a very helpful FAQ here: [SDCOE Face Covering Requirements for K-12 School Settings](#)

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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/>

Despite the confusion and public debate over the new health rules, we are grateful the state has prioritized in-person instruction for children once again. We can't wait to welcome all of our students back on campus. Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Feliciano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "D" being a large, stylized letter.

David Feliciano
Superintendent, La Mesa-Spring Valley Schools
#LMSVHeart