

August 7, 2020

Guidance Amendment #3: 2020-2021 School Year Planning: A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19

On Monday, August 3, 2020, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released guidance for youth sports as well as details about the waiver process for elementary schools to resume in-person instruction in counties where that is not otherwise permitted. Currently, California mandates schools may only reopen to in-person instruction when their county has met targets for epidemiological metrics and have been off the [County Data Monitoring List](#) for at least 14 days. The CDPH [COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Schools and School-Based Programs](#) document that was designed to assist schools as they prepare to resume in-person instruction was also updated on August 3.

This August 6, 2020, Guidance Amendment #3 to the 2020-2021 School Year Planning: A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19 is being issued to reflect recent changes in state guidance and to provide clarification and guidance for schools in San Joaquin County regarding youth sports, waivers, and noninstructional, individual meetings with students. Guidance Amendment #3 was approved by the San Joaquin County Public Health Officer.

Waiver Process for Elementary Schools to Resume In-Person Instruction

The [COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework](#) developed by the CDPH authorized local health officers to grant a waiver that would allow elementary schools to open for in-person instruction in counties on the County Data Monitoring List. The waiver process released by the CDPH on August 3 lists requirements a school must meet to be granted a waiver. This includes a recommendation that schools should not be considered for a waiver to reopen to in-person instruction if the COVID-19 case rate in the school's county is more than two times the threshold to be on the Monitoring List. Twice the threshold is 200 cases per 100,000 population. As of the writing of this amendment, the case rate in San Joaquin County was 308 cases per 100,000 population, more than three times the threshold rate.

The San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE) and San Joaquin County Public Health Services (SJCPHS) adhere to this and all the waiver requirements released on August 3. More information on the waiver process is available on the CDPH website:

- [In-Person Learning Elementary Education Waiver Process](#)
- [CDPH Waiver Notice for Local Health Jurisdictions](#)
- [Waiver Letter Template and Cover Form](#)

Sports and Conditioning

Guidance Amendment #3 adheres to all direction included in the CDPH's [COVID-19 INTERIM GUIDANCE: Youth Sports](#) document and additional restrictions in the [August 5 order of the San Joaquin County Public Health Officer](#). The CDPH guidance for youth sports establishes a consistent set of rules that apply to all youth sports programs — including school-based, club, and recreational programs. Outdoor and indoor sporting events, assemblies, and other activities that require close contact or that would promote congregating, such as tournaments and competitions, are not permitted at this time. Youth sports are permitted only when physical distancing of at least six feet and a stable cohort of participants can be maintained. For sports that cannot be conducted with sufficient physical distancing or cohorting, only physical conditioning and training are permitted and only where physical distancing can be maintained. All youth sports activities in San Joaquin County, including conditioning and training, must take place outdoors.

Meeting with Individual Students

The SJCOE and SJCPHS continue to adhere to the state mandate requiring schools in San Joaquin County not to begin in-person instruction until the county is off the County Data Monitoring List for at least 14 days. In addition, it is recommended that school staff be allowed to report to classrooms or other school facilities to support distance learning or perform other job duties. Limited individual, noninstructional, in-person activities with students may still be permitted on school campuses. These activities must be limited in scope and frequency. Two examples of permitted activities are special education assessments that cannot be performed remotely and kindergarten meet-and-greets.

The school planning document for San Joaquin County -- 2020-2021 School Year Planning: A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19 -- was developed by the SJCOE and SJCPHS in collaboration with superintendents from the county's 14 school districts before its release on June 17, 2020. Aligned with CDPH recommendations and approved by the San Joaquin County Public Health Officer, the document was based on the best available information about COVID-19 in the county at the time of its development and publication. The guidance in the document was subject to revision as circumstances related to COVID-19 changed.

The original planning documents and all amendments can be found at <http://www.sjcoe.org/healthsafety>.

More information and guidance documents can be found at the state's COVID-19 information website at covid19.ca.gov and the CDPH website at cdph.ca.gov.