

September 16, 2020

### **Guidance Amendment #4: 2020-2021 School Year Planning: A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19**

On August 28, 2020, San Joaquin County Public Health Services (SJCPHS) announced it would begin the process of accepting waiver applications to bring students in transitional kindergarten through sixth-grade on campus for in-person instruction, releasing the [SJCPHS Waiver Application Process](#).

On August 24, 2020, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released updated guidance for small, supervised groups of children and youth. Updated on September 4, 2020, the [Guidance for Small Cohorts/Groups of Children and Youth](#) and accompanying [Providing Targeted, Specialized Support and Services at School FAQs](#) provide guidance to allow limited in-person instruction and targeted support services of small groups of students in schools and districts in counties on the Widespread (purple) tier of California's [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#).

Public, charter, and private schools in San Joaquin County may wish to offer limited in-person instruction, targeted support services, and facilitation of distance learning in small group environments for a specified subset of children and youth under these changes from state and local health officials. This September 16, 2020, Guidance Amendment #4 to the 2020-2021 School Year Planning: A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19 is being issued to reflect these changes and provide clarification and guidance for schools in San Joaquin County. Guidance Amendment #4 was approved by the San Joaquin County Public Health Officer.

#### **Small-group, in-person services in K-12 schools**

Schools in San Joaquin County began the 2020-2021 school year providing distance learning to all students, following California mandates that schools may only reopen to in-person instruction if they are located in counties meeting targets for epidemiological metrics. San Joaquin County is currently in the Widespread (purple) tier. Schools cannot open for in-person instruction until the county meets the requirements to move to the Substantial (red) tier. Schools and school districts in San Joaquin County have implemented robust distance learning models to provide high-quality education and support to students. However, in-person learning is the best scenario for most students, and it may be essential for some student groups. The guidance for small groups allows Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to prioritize small cohorts for limited in-person instruction and targeted support services based on students' needs.

- Guidance Amendment #4 adheres to all direction included in the CDPH [Guidance for Small Cohorts/Groups of Children and Youth](#) and accompanying [Providing Targeted, Specialized Support and Services at School FAQs](#). Schools and educational programs

providing in-person, targeted instruction, and specialized support and services in stable cohorts must meet all of the conditions detailed in the state guidance.

A waiver is not required to provide small-group instruction. For circumstances not detailed in the state guidance, local school officials -- in collaboration with the Public Health Officer and school-based staff -- should implement measures consistent with local operations and needs.

### **Waiver Process to Resume In-Person Instruction in TK - Sixth Grade**

The [COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework](#) developed by the CDPH authorized local health officers to grant waivers allowing in-person instruction to transitional kindergarten through sixth-grade students in counties where schools are only permitted to use a distance learning model. Schools are not eligible for a waiver until their county records 14 or fewer daily new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population under the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#).

As of the writing of this amendment, the case rate in San Joaquin County was 9.5 daily cases per 100,000 population. Public, charter, and private schools are now eligible to apply for waivers through SJCPHS.

Guidance Amendment #4 adheres to the state and local requirements for the application process, including the information found in:

- [SJCPHS Waiver Application Process](#)
- [CDPH In-Person Learning Elementary Education Waiver Process](#)

Successful waiver applicants should follow the CDPH [COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Schools and School-Based Programs](#). The [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 General Checklist for Schools and School-Based Programs](#) should also be used to supplement the guidance.

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 San Joaquin County Office of Education (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](https://covid19.ca.gov) and the CDPH website at [cdph.ca.gov](https://cdph.ca.gov).