



Dear Lompoc Community,

CDC study: Teachers key to COVID-19 infections in 1 district
A new study finds that teachers may be more important drivers of COVID-19 transmission in schools than students

By JEFF AMY Associated Press

February 22, 2021, 3:32 PM

The Associated Press

ATLANTA -- A new study finds that teachers may be more important drivers of COVID-19 transmission in schools than students.

The paper released Monday by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studies nine COVID-19 transmission clusters in elementary schools in the Atlanta suburb of Marietta in December and January, that included one cluster where 16 teachers, students and relatives of students at home were infected.

In only one of the nine clusters was a student clearly the first documented case, while a teacher was the first documented case in four clusters. In another four, the first case was unclear. Of the nine clusters, eight involved probable teacher-to-student transmission. Two clusters saw teachers infect each other during in-person meetings or lunches, with a teacher then infecting other students.

“Educators played an important role in the spread,” CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky told reporters in an online briefing Monday. “COVID-19 spread often occurred during in-person meetings or lunches and then subsequently spread to classrooms. The findings line up with studies from the United Kingdom that found teacher-to-teacher was the most common type of school transmission there, and a German study that found in-school transmission rates were three times higher when the first documented case was a teacher. In some American districts, schools have had to go all-virtual because so many teachers have been exposed to the virus.

Other research has suggested that there's low transmission of viruses in schools and that they should reopen for in-person instruction, a message that President Joe Biden's administration has been pushing in recent weeks to mixed success. The 8,700-student Marietta district, like all but a handful in Georgia, has been offering in-person classes since the fall. Superintendent Grant Rivera said more than 90% of elementary students came back in person, making some classrooms relatively crowded.

All the Marietta clusters also involved “less than ideal physical distancing,” with students often less than 3 feet apart, although plastic dividers were placed on desks. “The two main reasons for the spread of COVID-19 in these schools were inadequate physical distancing and mask adherence,” Walensky said.

In seven cases, transmission may have taken place during small-group instruction sessions where teachers were close to students. Although the authors said they observed students wearing masks, interviews found that “inadequate mask use” by students could have contributed to the spread of infection in five clusters.

The CDC again advised that schools need to pursue “multifaceted” strategies to prevent the spread of the virus, including cutting down on teacher-to-teacher meetings, making sure masks are worn correctly and increasing physical distancing, especially during mealtimes when people can’t wear masks.

Rivera said the school district reengineered instruction in elementary classrooms, making sure students and teachers spend fewer than 15 minutes at a time huddled in small groups and that children are spaced out when they gather on rugs for reading or other activities.

Rivera said the district had been using Fridays not for class time, but for teacher collaboration. Now, the district is encouraging teachers to stay separate. “We told teachers that all teacher collaboration should occur virtually,” Rivera said. He also said chairs had been removed from teacher workrooms, that copy machines have in some cases been moved to other places, and that teachers who plan to eat with a colleague have been told they must eat outdoors.

Student mealtimes pose the biggest challenge, Rivera said. “To be honest, I’m really struggling with it,” he said. Students had been kept in classes to limit movement and keep students in isolated pods, but now classes are being encouraged to eat outdoors, with some especially full classrooms going to larger spaces like cafeterias, gyms or auditoriums. The Marietta district has also continued extensive virus testing after the study ended, Rivera said.

The study also said that in addition to those strategies, it might be desirable to vaccinate teachers to protect educators, cut down on in-school transmission and keep schools operating in person, although the CDC restated that teacher vaccination is “not a requirement for reopening schools.”

American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten said the study “validates” the CDC’s guidelines. “School buildings can be safe for teachers and kids, but the layered mitigation and testing and tracing must be implemented to curb the risk of transmission, with vaccine availability as another layer of protection,” the teacher union chief said in a statement.

Superintendent’s Meeting

At this week’s meeting we discussed school reopenings across Santa Barbara County. Cabinet and I met several times to fine tune messaging to families and staff.

Vaccine Task Force

I was asked to take part in a county-wide vaccine task force. This week we met twice for several hours each time. Lompoc Valley Medical Center will be vaccinating a minimum of 1,000 TK-12 education staff beginning Thursday, March 4. We are pleased to partner with the SBCPHD and LVMC in this effort. Further details on next week’s vaccination clinics will be forthcoming. Eligible staff working in higher-risk settings or with vulnerable populations will be receiving invitations beginning Monday.

Home Stretch to Reopening

Each evening this week, including Monday (which was technically a holiday for LUSD staff), our administrators have shown their dedication to our students. Every evening from 5:00 until 6:30 p.m., we have been meeting to fine-tune the details of reopening. Topics have ranged from figuring out how to transport the food from the kitchens to the classrooms for students to take at dismissal, staffing, readjustment of parent/teacher conferences, preparation time for teachers, isolation tent coverage, and more! Cabinet has been attending the meetings to make sure all staff feel supported as we make this exciting transition.

Association of CA School Administrators (ACSA) Webinar

Lompoc Unified hosted a county-wide webinar this week for administrators and aspiring administrators. Wes Smith, ACSA’s Executive Director, spoke to attendees about the latest news in education; state testing, funding, and more. In addition, he highlighted the importance of our administrators taking care of themselves. He stated that when administrators can take care of themselves, they are better at serving their staff and students. In this highly political environment, where education has been in the cross-hairs unlike any time before, self-care is all the more important. It was a great event that was attended by administrators across Santa Barbara County.

United Way Donation

Our Transportation Department picked up a large donation of PPE from the United Way. Lompoc Unified received the allocation below. Once again our community comes together for our schools!

District Name	# of Cloth Masks Adult Size	# of Surgical Masks	# of Face Shield for Educators	# N95 Masks for Nurses	# of Nitrile Gloves for Nurses	# of boxes of Hand Sanitizer (20 bottles per box)	# of 3Ply masks
Lompoc Unified	12,000	32,750	3,800	400	400	92	1,000

Recruiting Fair

We participated in a recruiting fair this past weekend with Stanislaus State. We interacted with a variety of interested teachers. Luckily, we have been holding virtual recruiting for some time, so participating in this event was not new to us. We will be extending the Signing Bonus MOU, so we can be competitive with other districts. As you know, a record number of teachers are retiring this year. Therefore, any incentives we can offer to entice applicants to choose LUSD will benefit us in filling our vacancies for next year. We will start interviewing the first week of March to beat out other districts as well.

We will also be participating in Cal Poly and Turlock County Office of Education recruitment fairs coming up in March. We are also using EdCal, EdWeek, EdJoin, and CASBO.

LUSD in the News

<https://www.noozhawk.com/article/lompoc-unified-school-district-names-three-administrators>

https://santamariatimes.com/news/local/education/orcutt-union-lompoc-unified-districts-to-welcome-back-k-6-students-next-month/article_70587109-f18f-589c-9d46-01220e0ca0a7.html

TSPs

The Teacher Support Providers have continued to work on the Jim Knight Impact Cycle with their teachers. This week, their work was truly that of support. Many of the teachers they work with will be entering a physical classroom with students for the first time as an official teacher. Helping the teachers with the excitement, uncertainty, and jitters that come with these changes has been a focus this week.

LUSD Community Collaboration

LUSD continues to provide information to community agencies every two weeks regarding the re-opening of schools, social-emotional services, and safety and health. At the last meeting, on February 23, Pupil Support Services reviewed the plan for elementary students to begin returning for in-person learning on March 8 by grade level spans. Additional collaboration between Dr. Blifeld and LUSD health staff has contributed to our planning process. The next meeting will be March 9.

CAEP Consortium

The Adult Education Consortium between LUSD and Allan Hancock College met on Thursday February 25. The consortium is the governing body for funds received from the state to support adult education programs in Lompoc and Santa Maria. The agenda included reviewing expense reports of the two agencies, closing out funds from previous fiscal years, approval of a marketing proposal that will be managed through LUSD if the LUSD Board approves, discussing a potential name change for the consortium, and the three-year plan.

Paper Tutoring Service

Paper, the tutoring service company providing 24/7 support for LUSD in fifth through twelfth grade students, will host two PARENT webinars:

Monday, March 1 at 5:30 in English

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85343230885>

Meeting ID: 853 4323 0885

Wednesday, March 3 at 5:30 in Spanish

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81177784909>

Meeting ID: 811 7778 4909

Please click here to view the flyers:

<https://www.lusd.org/parents/parent-resources>

LUSD & SchoolZilla Partnership

The Education Services staff met with the Renaissance/Schoolzilla team to engage in a data discussion around our students' most recent STAR Reading/ELA and STAR Math assessment scores. SchoolZilla provided the LUSD staff with an easy to use platform for accessing, viewing, and sharing data reports. Administrators can quickly determine how many students completed the assessments, the students performing at or above the benchmark, and who needs additional support. Because CA public schools do not have CAASPP achievement data from Spring 2020, the STAR assessment information is incredibly valuable in determining student growth, achievement, and progress.

LCAP Update

LUSD Ed Services staff have been meeting and discussing the Local Control Funding Formula, previous LCAP goals, state priority areas, and plans for the new LCAP at school site staff meetings, Site Council meetings, and Administrative Council meetings. The team is reviewing and analyzing student achievement data to complete the Annual Updates and inform the 2021-

2024 LCAP. In addition, LUSD staff will be applying for the Expanded Learning Grant through CDE in the coming weeks. These funds can be applied to support an expanded school day, additional instructional time, and/or summer learning opportunities for students. The Board will receive information about the LCAP on their March 9 meeting.

ELA Interim Assessment Blocks

LUSD’s sixth grade teachers administered the ELA IAB (Interim Assessment Blocks) and have shown an impressive completion rate. The Smarter Balanced interim assessments are fixed-form assessments. This means that every student has access to the same test questions and the test does not adapt according to the student response. The IAB scores provide data to teachers based on the same set of criteria for each student. The interim assessments are powerful resources to improve teaching and learning for all students. The completion rate shows the dedication of our students, teachers and administrators.

Testing Updates:

IABs	Completion Rate
Ruth	73/76 (96%)
Mig	TBD
Fillmore	74/ 88 (84%)
BV	69/84 (82%)
LB	41/62 (66%)
La Honda	49/60 (82%)
La Canada	91/96 (95%)
Crestview	24/27 (89%)
Hapgood	83/95 (87%)

Foster Youth/Homeless

A City of [Lompoc/ Santa Barbara County resources](#) Guide was shared with all liaisons. This resource guide is a tool to assist families who are in need and contact the LUSD liaisons. The guide provides agency contacts and addresses and phone numbers.

CTE

CTE teachers have started to hold advisory board meetings with local industry partners. The meetings are held in order to gather information to ensure the curriculum matches what is needed in addition to job skills the partners may identify that is lacking so that we may teach to those skills, unearth how business has changed in the past year, and to determine if there are any shadowing or internship opportunities available.

Melanie Honeycutt, CTE teacher at Cabrillo High School, was recently recognized on how she keeps her students motivated during distance learning. Congratulations Melanie!

<https://readwritecode.blog/tangible-rewards-to-keep-virtual-learners-motivated-a33e53f81fd4>

Attendance

Discussions on Intra District transfer applications, along with projected enrollment numbers for next school year have begun with secondary school site principals

A huge thank you goes out to Keith Feickert from the City of Lompoc who has created a map of Lompoc to assist with school boundaries. In order to access the map, type in the address and it will indicate which elementary, middle, and high school are in that attendance boundary, based on the address entered. The map has been posted on the LUSD website for all to use. Click on this [LINK](#) to see this helpful tool. Thank you Keith!

Second Interim and Multi-Year Projection

Doug Sorum and Margarita Reyes have been busy finalizing the Second Interim report and Multi-Year Projection for presentation at the March 9 board meeting.

Meal Service Schedule for Elementary Reopening

The current meal service schedule has been adjusted for the reopening of our elementary campuses. Elementary students who are returning to in-person learning will be offered grab & go breakfast and lunch at their school to take home. 100% virtual learners will be able to pick up their meals on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at Lompoc High School, Lompoc Valley Middle School, Maple High School, and Cabrillo High School. Crestview Elementary will be open for service to their virtual learners. We will continue to serve our ASES programs on site, for breakfast, lunch and snack.

Meal Service for AM/PM Elementary Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 AM Cohort A Starts School	8:00 AM Cohort A Starts School	Virtual Day	8:00 AM Cohort A Starts School	8:00 AM Cohort A Starts School
10:30 AM Cohort A Grab & Go Tuesday's Breakfast and Lunch	10:30 AM Cohort A Grab & Go Wednesday's and Thursday's Breakfast and Lunch		10:30 AM Cohort A Grab & Go Friday's Breakfast and Lunch	10:30 AM Cohort A Grab & Go Monday's Breakfast and Lunch
12:00 PM Cohort B Starts School	12:00 PM Cohort B Starts School		12:00 PM Cohort B Starts School	12:00 PM Cohort B Starts School
2:30 PM Cohort B Grab & Go Tuesday's Breakfast and Tuesday's Lunch	2:30 PM Cohort B Grab & Go Wednesday's and Thursday's Breakfast and Lunch		2:30 PM Cohort B Grab & Go Friday's Breakfast and Lunch	2:30 PM Cohort B Grab & Go Monday's Breakfast and Lunch

100% Virtual Learner Meal Pick Up

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM at Lompoc High, Lompoc Valley Middle, Cabrillo High, Maple High

M&O Update

We still have two open positions in the maintenance area. One is for a carpenter position and the other is for a Maintenance Worker II position. Additionally, we are in the process of recruiting for our turf and pest control position.

The Maintenance Direct online work order system lists a total of 376 open work orders. Our team is busy catching up and getting ready for schools to re-open. Our custodial teams are making final adjustments for our reopening. They are becoming familiar with the new tents and procedures. Among a variety of issues, here are some of the problems our M&O team have been solving:

- Many roof leaks after our last storm - District-wide
- Maple High gas line - in progress
- Multiple key and lock issues - District-wide
- HVAC issues - District-wide
- Installing guards in the nurses' offices to offer protection to students and staff

Construction

- Exterior LED lighting is complete
- Furnace, boiler, and pool heater replacement projects at LHS, La Honda, and CHS - ongoing
- Irrigation Smart-Controller installations - complete and are awaiting IP addresses
- CHS solar array has mobilized and started.
- Ed Center complex asphalt on schedule for March 5
- El Camino licensed server and installation of seven security cameras, will begin in the third week of March
- The IEEEEP portable classroom move has been approved and is awaiting DSA

Thank you for your support.

Trevor McDonald
Superintendent of Schools