



NDE Safe Return to School Plan 2021-2022

Welcome back for the 2021-2022 school year! I am delighted to see students return to Notre Dame Elementary and Preschool. I am so grateful to be your Principal and to share our plans for in-person instruction for all students this fall.

We are encouraged by increases in vaccination rates in our area and yet we remain cautious about COVID variants. Vaccination remains the leading prevention strategy to address the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A safe return is a priority for us and I could not be more confident that we are ready! We have gone to great measures to plan for keeping students and staff safe. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have released guidance calling for the full reopening of schools and requiring that masks be worn indoors. While students are on campus, masking indoors is required for everyone—including vaccinated individuals. We will verify vaccination status of all volunteers and students 12 and up.

As a Preschool to 8th grade school, our two schools serve children under the age of 12 who are not yet eligible for vaccinations. That is expected to change in the fall. At this time, we will follow guidance that emphasizes implementing multi-layered prevention strategies (frequent hand washing, sanitizing, mask wearing, passive health screening and the like). We will continue to monitor community case rates and will adapt these health and safety procedures in accordance with CDPH updates for schools.

We are excited to welcome all students safely to school 5 days a week for a full day of in-person instruction. Please review this document in its entirety and contact us if you have any questions. Again, we look forward to the new year!

Sincerely,

Kathleen Jeremiassen, EdD
Notre Dame Elementary and Preschool

Our commitment to Health & Safety

Mask Wearing

Notre Dame Elementary and Preschool will continue to adhere to the most recent COVID guidelines issued by the CDPH. On July 12, 2021, the CDPH announced new mask guidance and revised it on August 3, 2021:

- All students, staff and visitors are required to wear masks indoors at Notre Dame Elementary and Preschool, with exemptions per CDPH face mask guidance. We are not selling “NDE” masks this year. Acceptable masks are solid in color and in NDE Uniform Colors (black, blue, white, grey), without logos (unless NDE from last year) or patterns. Students may wear fabric or disposable masks.
- Masks are optional outdoors for all TK-8 settings; however, here at NDE we are building a culture where wearing a mask is encouraged and normalized, so that everyone feels safe to do so outdoors *and* we will wear masks for morning assembly.
- Masks are not required when eating or drinking.
- Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition must wear a nonrestrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.
- NDE and Preschool will provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to wear a mask to school.
- In limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for developmental reasons, e.g., communicating or assisting

young children or those with special needs, a face shield with a drape (per CDPH guidelines) can be used in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others.

Hand Sanitizer

Hand sanitizer will be available in classrooms and common areas such as lunch areas, multipurpose rooms, front offices, and priority locations identified by the school safety officer. However, it is still recommended that staff and students use hand washing with soap and water as their primary method of hygiene.

Hygiene/Handwashing

Staff and students will be shown proper hand hygiene including hand washing and use of hand sanitizer. Handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff will help to maintain a healthy school environment. Handwashing/sanitizing will be reinforced daily with time allotted to wash hands regularly. Students and staff will be instructed on protocols for coughing, sneezing, etc. to protect ourselves and others. Visual reminders to increase hygiene procedures are provided and posted for staff and students.

Cleaning

Cleaning and disinfecting measures will ensure the health and well-being of staff and students. We will clean classrooms and

common areas once every day. Additional deep cleaning and disinfecting will take place within 24 hours when a COVID exposure has occurred on campus. Employees will be provided cleaner/disinfectant to use in their areas, when necessary. According to the January 14, 2021 document released by CDPH, “Frequent disinfection, which was thought at the beginning of the pandemic to be a key safety component, can pose a health risk to children and students due to the chemicals used and has proven to have limited to no impact on COVID19 transmission.”

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing in schools is not recommended “due to the obstacles it would present to California schools’ full reopening.” CDPH reports that recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. Masks are optional outdoors for all in TK-8 school settings, although at NDE and Preschool, we are building a culture where wearing a mask is encouraged and normalized, so that everyone feels safe to do so outdoors. Moreover, the CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated. NDE will not have “cohorts” or distance 6 feet apart.

Food Services

Parents may provide lunch from home if they choose. Hot lunch may be available for purchase and will begin August 25, 2021.

Masks are not required when eating or drinking. NDE and Preschool will physically distance as much as possible while eating. Using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating will help facilitate distancing. Staff will clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food will be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals. Given the guidance on the very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, we will not limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.

Visitors to Campus

NDE and Preschool will allow access to all parents and service providers. All visitors will be required to wear masks regardless of vaccination status. NDE and Preschool will limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated.

Additionally, classroom volunteers and visitors will be asked to affirm their vaccination status prior to entering a classroom. Affirm this status with the school office. Please scan a copy of the vaccination card or status to the school secretary. Remember, all volunteers must have a background check (fingerprinting) and complete the Virtus training. Both fingerprinting and Virtus information are located on Parent Information and Forms on SchoolSpeak. NDE and Preschool will continue to emphasize the importance of staying home when sick. Anyone, including visitors, who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as flu or COVID-19, should stay home and seek testing and care.

Ventilation

For indoor spaces, our recent HVAC improvements allow for improved air quality. Ventilation will be optimized by following CDPH guidance on indoor environments and filtration strategies designed to reduce long-range airborne transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory Infections. Our campus will continue to leave windows and doors open with consideration to outdoor temperature. Additionally, each classroom and other small spaces have appropriate HEPA air filters/air purifiers.

Staying Home When Sick

Students and staff are asked to **stay home** if they feel sick or if they are experiencing symptoms. This is a crucial preventative measure in maintaining safety at school. If symptoms are consistent with COVID-19, students and staff will be encouraged to test for COVID-19. NDE and Preschool will implement contact tracing to minimize any possible spread at schools.

Staff members and students with symptoms of COVID-19 infection will be advised not to return for in-person instruction until they have met CDPH criteria to return to school for those with symptoms:

1. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **and**
2. Other symptoms have improved; **and**
3. They have a negative test for COVID-19, **OR** a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are

typical of their underlying chronic condition **OR** a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative named diagnosis **OR** at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

Common Symptoms of COVID-19 (CDPH)

Headache Fever or chills Cough Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing Muscle or body aches	New loss of taste or smell Sore throat Congestion or runny nose Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea
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Testing to Mitigate Spread

NDE and Preschool will implement contact tracing and require COVID-19 testing when a student or staff member is determined to have experienced a possible school-based exposure. This response will take place in every instance of a confirmed COVID-19 exposure and this will allow students and staff to remain in school safely.

Vaccinations

NDE students ages 12+ are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Resources and information regarding vaccination centers in our community may be viewed at:
www.smchealth.org/COVID-19-vaccination-program-overview

Daily Active Health Screenings

Daily Active Health Screenings will no longer be conducted on campus prior to entering school. Families are asked to monitor student wellness and to keep students home when they are sick or show symptoms of illness. Parents can regularly take temperatures and regularly conduct health checks at home.

Travel

Travel Recommendations and Requirements

Domestic Travel	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
Get tested 1-3 days before travel	✓	
Get tested 3-5 days after travel and self-quarantine for 7 days. Self-quarantine for 10 days if you don't get tested.	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓
International Travel	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
Get tested 1-3 days before traveling out of the US	✓	
Mandatory test required before flying to US	✓	✓
Get tested 3-5 days after travel	✓	✓

International Travel	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
Self-quarantine after travel for 7 days with a negative test or 10 days without test	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓

Travel Please see the table below for CDC recommendations and requirements concerning travel. [CDC Travel Guidelines](#)

Domestic Travel:

Additional Resources

CDPH Guidance for Schools & Travel: [CDC Travel Guidelines](#)

SMCOE Recovery Pandemic Framework

[Pandemic Recovery Framework, August 9, 2022](#)