

October 20 COVID-19 Updates and Information

A number of public health agencies have released updates to their COVID-19 protocols this month.

Earlier, this week, for instance, the **California Department of Public Health** issued a [press release](#) reaffirming the state's commitment to indoor masking in K-12 school settings.

"Recent studies from the 2021-2022 school year confirm that schools with universal masking requirements are less likely to experience outbreaks," California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly and California Department of Public Health Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Tomás Aragón said in the release.

"Areas of the United States without school mask mandates experienced larger increases in pediatric COVID-19 case rates after the school year began, compared to areas with school mask requirements...This strategy represents the best path for schools to protect children and school staff, ensuring that classrooms remain safe spaces for learning, and children are provided every opportunity to be successful."

Earlier this month, the **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** released [updated guidance on celebrating holidays](#) during the pandemic, as well as updated guidance for both [domestic travel](#) and [international travel](#) during COVID-19.

As many of you know, an **FDA advisory committee** will meet this Tuesday, October 26, to vote on giving emergency use authorization for the Pfizer vaccine for children 5 to 11 years old. In a conference call this week, **Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD)** officials told school district representatives that once the vaccine is approved for children in this age group, it will take several weeks to get the vaccinations distributed to health care centers, public health agencies, and pharmacies. Vaccinations are expected to start being available around the third week of November, however.

The **Alameda County Office of Education** is working with ACPHD to set up vaccination clinics throughout the county once the EUA is approved. AUSD will work closely with both organizations to provide vaccinations to children in our community.

On October 1 **Governor Newsom** announced that all students ages 12-17 will be required to have the COVID-19 vaccination once the FDA fully approves the use of the vaccine in that age group (our [press release](#) has more details). **Superintendent Scuderi** will review that mandate at the October 26 Board of Education meeting. The presentation for that meeting is available [here](#); the agenda and Zoom details for the meeting are available [here](#).