



**Newport-Mesa**

Unified School District

# **2021-2022 COVID-19 Safety Plan**

September 2021

## Introduction

Our goal is that all students will have access to safe and full in-person instruction and to as much instructional time as possible. We will continue to make every effort to maintain a safe and healthy environment for our students and staff while adhering to all state and local health and safety requirements. This plan will ensure a safe, successful and full in person opening for the 2021-22 school year by prioritizing universal masking, classroom ventilation, healthy hand hygiene, contact tracing, and response testing.

The Safety Plan is based on the current guidance provided by the California Department of Public Health, Center for Disease Control, Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA), and other agencies such as the CA Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). We will continue to monitor and review new information as it is released in order to adjust our safety plan as necessary.

## Face Masks

Masks are one of the most effective and simplest safety mitigation layers to prevent in-school transmission of COVID-19 infections.

### Staff

**Newport-Mesa Unified School District will require staff to wear masks when sharing indoor space with students regardless of vaccination status.** Masks are not required for vaccinated adults in the workplace when students are not present and the adult has completed the attestation and approval process. Masks are not required when outdoors but are optional. All masks and other PPE will be provided by the district.

If a mask cannot be used for pedagogical or 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 instead of a mask while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others. Staff must return to wearing a mask when the pedagogical or developmental reason is no longer applicable as well as when outside of the classroom.

A supply of masks and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available on each school site. The following PPE supplies are available on site. Examples include:

- Hand Sanitizer - For personal use and classroom use
- Alcohol Wipes - For cleaning shared items
- Cleaning Spray - For cleaning desks and other work surfaces
- Face Masks - Disposable face masks available for staff and students
- Face Shields - Available for staff to use with face mask for extra protection throughout school day, or alone for limited time when teaching phonological instruction to students (optional)
- Face Shields with Drapery - Fitted or loose, available for staff to use throughout school day in lieu of face mask when working with students who do not wear masks or in situations where there is an increased risk of body fluid or aerosolized secretions (optional)
- N95 Masks - Available for staff to use in lieu of disposable or cloth face masks (optional). Supervisor approval is not necessary.
- Disposable Gowns - Available for staff to use when working closely with students who do not wear masks, in situations where it is difficult to maintain social distance with students for a long period of time, and when there is a concern about bodily fluids (optional)
- Disposable Gloves - Available for all staff for use. Required for food service and other duties that require gloves.

## Students

All students are required to wear face masks on the school bus and throughout the school day while indoors on the school campus. Visual reminders of mask requirements will be placed at the exterior entrances to classrooms or hallways. Masks are not required outdoors but are optional.

Disposable face masks are available to students as needed.

## **Exemptions from Face Covering Requirement**

The CDPH face covering guidance recognizes that there are some people who cannot wear a mask, including the following students:

- Those with a medical or mental health condition or disability that would hinder them from properly wearing a face covering
- Those who are hearing impaired
- Those that need to communicate with a person who is hearing impaired or where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

There is a face mask exemption available for students with a verified medical or mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.

School sites will work with students who are not exempt from masking requirements to help them meet the requirement. If needed, school sites will consult with parents for assistance. If a student is not exempt and continues to refuse to wear a mask, students will be offered an alternative educational opportunity, including the Cloud Campus.

## Exhibits

- [Student Face Mask Memo](#) (Revised 8/2021)
- [Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) (Risk Bulletin)
- [Proper Washing of Reusable Face Coverings](#) (Risk Bulletin)
- [List of Personal Protective Equipment Available at Each Site](#)
- [Application for Student Face Mask Exemption](#) (Revised 8/2021)
- [Application for Student Face Mask Exemption \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Disposable Masks and Gowns](#)
- [Classroom Mask Signs](#)
- [COVID-19 Protocols For The 2021-22 School Year](#)
- [Local protocols to enforce the mask requirements](#) (8/20/2021)

# Handwashing and other Hygiene Measures

Promoting and making time for hand washing is a CDPH-recommended safety layer.

- Staff will teach and reinforce proper handwashing technique, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Staff will provide students with time in the classroom for handwashing; at sites without classroom sinks, students may use hand sanitizer.
- Hand sanitizer and hand sanitizer stations are available on all school sites.
- School sites will also ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, masks, and hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer.
- Students will wash hands and use hand sanitizer throughout the day, including arrival to campus; after using the restroom; after going outside and returning to the classroom; after PE; before and after eating; and after coughing or sneezing.
- Hand hygiene should also be promoted before and after sharing resources/items.
- Post signage in high visibility areas to remind students and staff of proper techniques for handwashing and covering of coughs and sneezes and other prevention measures.
- Plexiglas barriers are installed in the front office.

## Exhibits

- [Hand Washing Signs](#)
- [Stop Germs! Wash your Hands Risk Bulletin](#)
- [Coughing and Sneezing Etiquette Risk Bulletin](#)

## Physical Distancing

Per CDPH, there is no minimum physical distancing requirement and 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.”

School sites will arrange for eating outdoors as much as feasible. In addition, they will maximize physical distance as much as possible when students and staff are eating indoors.

## Cleaning and Disinfection

Per CDPH COVID-19 guidance, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential viruses that may be on surfaces. Each school site has cleaning and disinfection protocols and will continue to implement them as they would before the pandemic.

If the school has had a sick person with COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, the space occupied will be cleaned AND disinfected.

## Food Service

Each school site will arrange for eating outdoors as much as feasible, staff will maximize physical distance as much as possible. When students and staff are eating indoors, staff will maximize physical distance as much as possible.

Each school site will clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals.

Given the very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, the district will not limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.

## Visitors

Our goal is to fully open our schools in person, and keep them open. NMUSD schools will continue to limit on-campus visitors to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Families should make every effort to conduct their business via phone except for critical business.

The only essential visitors allowed on campus at this time are direct service providers that include, but are not limited to, childcare, counseling, individual student-related services, etc. NMUSD is currently reviewing its guidelines for other types of visitors/volunteers.

In accordance with the CDPH's recommendation, NMUSD has developed a visitor policy.

- The school site will limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas where there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission.
- The school site will not limit access for direct service providers, but will ensure compliance with school visitor policies.
- Anyone, including visitors, who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as flu or COVID-19, should stay home and seek testing and care.
- All visitors are required to wear masks while indoors on campus unless exempt.

# Ventilation

Newport-Mesa Unified School District maximizes, to the extent feasible, the quantity or quality of outside air for our buildings with mechanical or natural ventilation systems by:

- Running ventilation systems two hours before and after occupancy and continuously during occupied periods to increase air exchanges
- Actively monitoring CO2 levels to verify adequate fresh air for occupancy
- Make the necessary adjustments to maintain adequate fresh air through dilution ventilation
- Increasing the minimum filter standard from MERV 8 to MERV 11 which is the highest possible filtration rating that is safe for the majority of HVAC systems at school sites without reducing airflow, ventilation or decreasing equipment reliability

High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) purifiers are provided in each classroom and available for other areas within NMUSD facilities as an additional layer of protection.

## Exhibits

- [High-Efficiency Particulate Air \(HEPA\) purifiers](#) (Risk Bulletin)

## Staying Home When Sick and Getting Tested

All staff and parents are required to conduct a wellness self-screening at home prior to coming to work/school and are asked to stay home if sick. Staff and students should refer to either the employee or student symptom tree to determine when they can return to work/school.

Employees will utilize the COVID Intake email ([intake@nmusd.us](mailto:intake@nmusd.us)) or phone (714-424-3695) to report if they are COVID-19 positive; believe they are a close contact; or have COVID-19 symptoms. Students experiencing any symptoms are asked to stay home and immediately contact the school office. Other cold/flu/allergy symptoms should still be reported and staff/students should stay home if ill.

Signs will be posted at all entrances instructing students, staff, and visitors not to enter campus if they have any COVID-19 symptoms.

Teachers will conduct a daily visual wellness check when students enter the classroom for the start of the school day. Teachers will observe students for signs of coughing, shortness of breath and/or loss of taste or smell.

## Exhibits

- [Student Symptom Decision Tree \(8/31/21\)](#)
- [Employee COVID-19 Wellness Screening \(8/23/21\)](#)
- [Sign-Do Not Enter If You Have A Cough or Fever](#)
- [Sign- Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

## Observation (Isolation) Room

The school site has identified an observation room for students. Supervision will be provided by the health assistant with back-up staff identified.

Observation (Isolation) Room process: Teachers will call the health office and an adult will come to the classroom immediately to walk student exhibiting or reporting symptoms to the observation room. If the health office does not pick up please call the main number.

- Office staff will contact parents/emergency contacts to pick up students.
- Parents are asked to provide several emergency contact numbers so students may be dismissed home as soon as possible.
- Staff monitoring the observation room will periodically wipe down hard surfaces in between individuals occupying the space.
- Observation room will be cleaned by site custodial staff at the end of the day if used.

## Vaccination Verification

Per CDPH guidance, NMUSD will seek documentation of the vaccination status of all staff. Verification of vaccination status is an important tool for use in determining the need for testing, contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation.

NMUSD utilizes a private and confidential process to verify vaccination records. Staff may voluntarily provide information that they are fully vaccinated. Employees who are fully vaccinated may, for the purposes of the revised safety protocols related to face coverings, verify their full vaccination status by completing the vaccine verification and attestation form and upload documentation, e.g. a copy of their vaccine card or other similar official document confirming vaccination status.

## Exhibits

- [Vaccine Verification Process \(7/12/2021\)](#)



# COVID-19 Testing

## Staff

NMUSD offers COVID-19 testing at no cost to all employees, during paid time, in the following categories as specified by Cal/OSHA and CDPH:

- Symptomatic employees who are not fully vaccinated.
- Close contacts to workplace exposures identified through contact tracing
- Following multiple COVID-19 infections and COVID-19 outbreaks in an exposed group with the following exceptions:
  - Employees who were not present during the relevant 14-day period
  - Employees who were fully vaccinated before the multiple infections or outbreak and who do not have symptoms
  - COVID-19 cases who did not develop symptoms after returning to work pursuant to our return-to-work criteria, no testing is required for 90 days after the initial onset of symptoms or, for COVID-19 cases who never developed symptoms, 90 days after the first positive test.

## Students

NMUSD refers families to resources for COVID-19 testing if students are required to test.

## Case Reporting and Contact Tracing

### Staff

Any staff member exhibiting symptoms will be sent home or wait in the observation room if they need to be transported home.

The employee COVID-19 reporting protocol for positive cases, close contacts or symptoms was developed to promote a healthy and safe school community and provide support and guidance for employees of NMUSD. It is important for employees to understand the critical nature of informing the District should they test positive for COVID-19 or have a close contact with a COVID-19 positive case. It's equally, if not more important, that the employee stays out of the workplace and makes this notification from home. All employee information gathered in the process described below will be confidential:

1. Employee is to contact the COVID-19 Intake by telephone at 714-424-3695 or by email at [intake@nmusd.us](mailto:intake@nmusd.us) when they are:
  - a. COVID-19 positive
  - b. Close contact to a COVID-19 positive person and is not vaccinated
  - c. The employee name, telephone number, position, site, last day at work and a brief description of their situation should be provided.

2. Intake Team will contact the employee if additional information is needed and will communicate the gathered information to the Health Services COVID-19 Liaison.
3. Health Services COVID-19 Liaison conducts contact tracing. Health Services COVID-19 Liaison collaborates/consults with the Orange County Health Care Agency. Positive cases and close contacts are reported to the Orange County Health Care Agency.
4. After contact tracing is completed notification include the following:
  - Health Services COVID-19 Liaison contacts all those who have been in close contact with the individual diagnosed with COVID and sends a follow-up written notification with information regarding quarantine and testing.
  - All staff members at the work site will receive an email notice that there has been a case.
  - Positive cases are noted on the District COVID-19 dashboard and reported to the Orange County Health Care Agency.

### **Student:**

Students on campus who are identified by staff or self-report as exhibiting symptoms will be required to wait in the observation (isolation) room until they can be transported home by parent/guardian.

If a student tests positive for COVID-19:

- The Site Nurse will conduct contact tracing.
- After contact tracing is completed notification include the following:
  - School nurse contacts all students who have been in close contact with the individual diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - Notices will be sent to students who are identified as a low risk exposure.
  - Human Resources COVID-19 Liaison contacts employees who were identified as close contacts. Employee receives follow-up written notification with information regarding quarantine and testing.
  - All staff members at the work site will receive an email notice that there has been a case.
  - Positive cases are noted on the District COVID-19 dashboard and reported to the Orange County Health Care Agency.

### **Exhibits**

- [Student Close Contact \(9/7/21\)](#)
- [Employee COVID-19 Wellness Screening \(8/23/21\)](#)

# Quarantine and Isolation

## Close Contact Quarantine Guidelines for Students Who Are Fully Vaccinated

- In the event of an exposure to COVID-19, quarantine is not necessary if the exposed student is asymptomatic and fully vaccinated.
- However, if symptoms consistent with COVID-19 develop within 14 days of the exposure, the student must immediately isolate, get tested, and notify the school office.
- Fully vaccinated means two weeks have passed since the last vaccine dose.

## Close Contact Quarantine Guidelines for Students Who Are Not Unvaccinated

***Student Exposure with Mask Protection*** If both the exposed student and COVID-19 infected individual were wearing a face covering, the asymptomatic, unvaccinated student who had close contact will be required to quarantine. “Close contact” means being within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more, over a 24-hour period regardless of masking.

1. **Full Quarantine-** This is the traditional quarantine model implemented last year. The student will quarantine--at home--for 10 days. The 10-day quarantine begins the day after the student’s last exposure with the COVID-positive individual. NO TESTING is required to return to school. \*\*Students who quarantine must monitor for symptoms and mask at all times through day 14 of exposure and if they develop symptoms during that time they need to notify the school nurse and isolate. **OR**
2. **Modified Quarantine-** a student may still come to school after a possible exposure if:
  - Both students were wearing a mask;
  - The student was exposed in the school setting (indoors, outdoors, or on a school bus)
  - The exposed student remains asymptomatic;
  - The exposed student undergoes twice weekly testing (testing at least 3 days apart with an FDA-authorized diagnostic test); **and**
  - The exposed student refrains from extracurricular activities including sports and activities within the community setting.
  - However, if symptoms consistent with COVID-19 develop within 14 days of the exposure, the person must immediately isolate, get tested, and notify the school office.

***Student Exposure Without Mask Protection*** If either or both parties were not wearing a face covering during student's exposure to the COVID-19, the asymptomatic, unvaccinated student who had close contact will be required to quarantine.

1. **Full Quarantine-** This is the traditional quarantine model implemented last year. If a parent chooses this option, the student will be required to stay at home for 10 days. The 10-day quarantine begins the day after the student's last exposure with the COVID-positive individual. NO TESTING is required to return to school. \*\*Students who quarantine must monitor for symptoms and mask at all times through day 14 of exposure and if they develop symptoms during that time they need to notify school nurse and isolate. **OR**
2. **Partial/Shortened Quarantine-**The close contact will be required to stay at home but may discontinue quarantine under the following conditions:
  - After day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after day 5 from the date of last known exposure with an FDA-authorized diagnostic test and the test is negative.
  - In order to discontinue self-quarantine before 14 days following the last known exposure, the asymptomatic close contact must:
    - Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through day 14 from last known exposure; **AND**
    - Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g. wearing a mask indoors and outdoors, physical distancing, and hand washing) through day 14 from last known exposure.
    - \*\*Students who quarantine must monitor for symptoms and mask at all times through day 14 of exposure and if they develop symptoms during that time they need to notify school nurse and isolate.

### **Isolation Guidelines for Fully Vaccinated & Unvaccinated Students/Staff**

- If the exposed person displays symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the students must immediately isolate, get tested, and notify the school office. The person may return to school/work if they have met the following CDPH criteria:
  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. The person has a negative test for COVID-19, OR has documentation from a healthcare provider that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition (e.g., allergies or asthma), OR has confirmation from a healthcare provider of an alternative named diagnosis (e.g., streptococcal

pharyngitis, coxsackievirus), OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

- If the exposed person tests positive for COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status, the person must isolate until 10 days have passed since the date of specimen collection of his/her first positive COVID-19 test. Students are not allowed to return to the school site or to participate in extracurricular activities.

## Training

NMUSD staff will receive training and instruction on the updated CDPH guidance. Training methods include utilization of the Keenan SafeSchools COVID-19 safety modules, NMUSD COV-19 safety plan training, memos on various topics, and risk bulletins.

A copy of this plan will be shared with families, and school staff will review the school's safety protocols and expectations for families.

Both staff and families will have the opportunity to ask questions and get a clear understanding of the plan.

### **Additional Exhibits and References**

- [District Website-COVID-19 Resources for 2021-22](#)
- [California Department of Public Health Website](#)
- [State of California COVID-19 Website](#)
- [The Safe Schools For All Hub](#)
- [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year](#)
- [K-12 Schools Guidance 2021-2022 Questions & Answers](#)