

Santa Barbara Unified Covid Safety Plan 2023 - 2024

Updated October 11, 2023

Introduction

The Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic necessitated the start of the 2020-2021 school year in a full distance learning model, then transitioned to a hybrid in-person/distance learning model, and eventually opened full-time for all students in Spring 2021. During this time students had the option of remaining in distance learning full-time.

The 2021-22 school year opened with all grades and schools operating full-time, with students grades 7-12 having the opportunity to participate in an Independent Study Program through Alta Vista Alternative Education programs. Subsequent school years have opened with schools and programs operating in the same manner.

At the center of all planning is Santa Barbara Unified School District's commitment to the health and safety of its students, staff, and families while continuing to provide an educational program committed to our mission: "To prepare students for a world yet to be created".

Our practice, planning, and preparation, as well as our fidelity to safety procedures, mitigates the risk of contracting the virus. Our plan continues to be informed by the guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD), and the California Department of Education (CDE).

COVID-19 SAFETY PROCEDURES

In July 2022 the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) put out the COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2023-2024 School Year. This document, its supporting documents, and subsequent iterations have provided the foundation of SB Unified's Covid Safety Plan. The current CDPH document, "[Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools and Child Care Settings to Support Safe In-Person Services and Mitigate the Spread of Communicable Diseases, 2023-2024 School Year](#)," was created October 2, 2023.

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1. General Measures

1.1 Santa Barbara Unified has established communication with local and State authorities to determine current disease levels and control measures in our community by regularly consulting metrics on the SBPH website. We will regularly review reports from the governor and the state superintendent of public instruction. We will communicate regularly with the Santa Barbara County Public Health (SBPH) education liaison, the County Superintendent of Schools, and other leaders from districts around the county.

1.2 Santa Barbara Unified will follow the guidance for COVID-19 mitigation and response as required by Santa Barbara Public Health.

2. Promote Health Hygiene Practices

2.1. Classroom sinks may be utilized, with teachers or other staff disinfecting high touch areas such as faucets and handles.

2.2. Students will wash or sanitize their hands throughout the day.

2.3. The district will follow [guidance from the CDPH as it pertains to the use of face coverings](#). Staff will also be provided additional PPE, including N95 masks, when directed by state or federal officials.

3. Intensify Cleaning, Disinfections, and Ventilation

3.1. It is not required, however to the greatest extent possible, teachers and other school personnel are encouraged to create situations where students have their own materials and supplies.

3.2 When choosing cleaning products after an in-school COVID-19 case has been identified, the district will use those approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved list "N" and follow product instructions.

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3.2.1 To reduce the risk of asthma and other health effects related to disinfection, the district will select disinfectant products on list with asthma-safer ingredients (hydrogen peroxide, citric acid or lactic acid) as recommended by the US EPA Design for Environment program.

3.2.2 The district will avoid products that contain peroxyacetic (peracetic) acid, sodium hypochlorite (bleach) or quaternary ammonium compounds, which can cause asthmatic attacks.

3.2.3 The district will follow label directions for appropriate dilution rates and contact times. Provide workers training on the chemical hazards, manufacturer's directions, Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use, and as applicable and as required by the Healthy Schools Act.

3.2.4 Our custodial staff and any other workers who clean and disinfect the school site will be equipped with proper personal protective equipment, including gloves, eye protection, respiratory protection, and other appropriate protective equipment as required by the product instructions. All products must be kept out of the reach of children and stored in a space with restricted access.

3.2.5 We have established a cleaning schedule in order to avoid both under- and over-use of cleaning products.

3.3 Santa Barbara Unified Custodial Services Supervisor approves all cleaning products in use at Santa Barbara Unified and ensures that they all meet the requirements of the EPA. Staff in charge of cleaning are properly trained and certified when necessary to safely use the cleaning products.

3.4. Santa Barbara Unified will ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting. It is our practice to introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors whenever possible. When disinfecting takes place, spaces will be aired out prior to student arrival. Disinfection will take place when students are not present.

3.5 Santa Barbara Unified has ensured that all water systems and features are safe to use after the COVID-19 shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water.

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4. Train All Staff and Educate Families

4.1 All staff will be re-trained and we will provide updated educational materials to families in the following safety actions:

- Enhanced sanitation practices
- Use of face coverings
- Testing Protocols
- COVID-19 specific symptom identification

5. Check for Signs and Symptoms

5.1 Santa Barbara Unified will prioritize the prevention of discrimination related to the wearing of masks, vaccination status, or positive COVID-19 cases.

5.2 Active reminders will go to staff and students who are sick or who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 to stay home.

5.3 Screening and other procedures for all staff and students entering the facility includes:

- Visual wellness checks of all students.
- Document/track incidents of possible exposure and notify local health officials, staff and families immediately of any positive case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality.
- If a student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, staff will communicate with the parent/caregiver and refer to the student's health history form and/or emergency card to identify if the student has a history of allergies.

6. Plan for When a Staff Member, Child, or Visitor Becomes Sick

6.1 All school sites and the district office have identified an isolation room to separate anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.

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6.2 Each school site and the district office has established procedures to arrange for safe transport home or to a healthcare facility, as appropriate, when an individual is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.

6.3 If a student, staff member, or visitor experiences a medical emergency, 911 will be called immediately.

6.4 A Covid-19 test will be offered to staff and students who exhibit symptoms while on campus.

6.5 Classrooms, workspaces, and isolation rooms occupied by sick individuals will be cleaned and disinfected before subsequent use according to CDC guidance.

6.6 Sick staff members and students will be advised not to return until they have met SBPHD criteria.

6.7 Students, including students with disabilities, will have access to instruction when out of class for Covid-19 related reasons.

7. Maintain Healthy Operations

7.1 Staff absenteeism is monitored so that trained back-up staff are available when needed. Other staff may telework when appropriate.

7.2 School Nurses monitor the types of illnesses and symptoms among students and staff to help isolate them promptly to avoid contagion spread.

7.3 The Chief Operations Officer is the liaison responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns from the public at-large. Principals serve in this capacity for the individual school campuses, consulting with School Nurses, HR, and Student Services as appropriate.

7.4 SB Unified will test staff and students in accordance with CDPH guidelines, adjusting protocols in response to active community cases.

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7.4.1 As recommended or required by the state or federal government, students and staff will be tested if symptomatic or exposed.

7.4.2 All students and staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to a positive case will be offered a test free of charge.

7.5 Staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness will be provided accommodations as appropriate.

7.5.1 Student Services and Human Resources will be the primary divisions responsible for providing this support.

8. Considerations for Partial or Total Closures

8.1 Santa Barbara Unified monitors state and local orders and health department notices for information regarding closures and adjustment of operations.

8.2 When a student, teacher or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and has exposed others at the school, the district will follow the [protocols linked here](#).