

*San Pasqual Union School District*

# Safe Return to In-Person Instruction & Continuity of Services Plan

*Updated for*

*2021/22 School Year*

## Introduction

In March 2020, schools across the state abruptly shut down for in-person learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to state restrictions, in-person instruction was prohibited for the remainder of the 2019/20 school year and to start the 2020/21 school year. Upon consultation with stakeholder groups, the San Pasqual Union School District (SPUSD) created plans to return students to in-person instruction as soon as it was advisable to do so.

In September 2020, SPUSD commenced the slow, steady, and safe process of returning students to school. By the end of November 2020, all students choosing in-person learning had the opportunity to do so. By April 2021, all students choosing on-campus learning resumed full-day learning at school.

During the 2020/21 school year, the COVID-19 pandemic was a disruptive influence, forcing students, classes, and, at times, entire grade levels, to quarantine for extended periods of time. Throughout that time, however, the multifaceted approach of masking, distancing, screening, cohorting, cleaning, and sanitizing prevented spread of the coronavirus on campus.

Much has been learned since the onset of the pandemic. First and foremost, we affirmed our strong belief that kids do better when attending in-person learning. As such, when the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) published their updated school guidance in July 2021, they stated, *“The foundational principle of this guidance is that all students must have access to safe and full in-person instruction and to as much instructional time as possible.”*

Consistent with recommendations from the CDPH, SPUSD strongly urges vaccination for all eligible individuals. While many of our students are not yet eligible for the vaccine, increased vaccination among those eligible will lower COVID-19 rates in our community.

As of this writing, universal masking indoors in schools is mandated by the CDPH. Per CDPH school guidance published July 12, 2021, *“CDPH will continue to assess conditions on an ongoing basis, and will determine no later than November 1, 2021, whether to update mask requirements.”* Although this remains a source of much controversy, by mandating mask wearing, CDPH has lessened barriers to in-person learning, including the easing of previous physical distancing requirements and strict quarantine practices.

In addition to vaccination recommendations and mask mandates, this plan provides a layered prevention strategy with safety measures that include self-screening, ventilation, testing, quarantine/isolation as necessary, hand hygiene, and enhanced cleaning efforts.

## Vaccination

*The District encourages all eligible persons to obtain vaccinations.* Increasing rates of vaccinations are the best opportunity to keep our community safe and our schools open.

The District has collected vaccination status of all employees to inform implementation of prevention strategies that vary by vaccination status (i.e., testing, contact tracing efforts, and quarantine/isolation practices). Employees declining to state vaccination status will be considered unvaccinated.

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## Self-Screening

Staying home when sick with COVID-19 is essential to keep COVID-19 infections out of schools and to prevent spread to others. Students, teachers, and staff are instructed to self-screen prior to coming to campus. Those with symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and not report to campus. These symptoms include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. Individuals with these symptoms are instructed to contact their healthcare provider for testing and care.

Staff students and visitors should not return to campus until:

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 SARS-CoV-2, OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition (e.g., allergies or asthma) OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative named diagnosis (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus), OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

It also is essential for people who are not fully vaccinated to quarantine after a recent exposure to someone with COVID-19 (see [Decision Tree](#) for details).

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## Masks

As per recent CDPH guidance:

*“Masks are one of the most effective and simplest safety mitigation layers to prevent in-school transmission of COVID-19 infections and to support full time in-person instruction in K-12 schools. SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is transmitted primarily by aerosols (airborne transmission), and less frequently by droplets. Physical distancing is generally used to reduce only droplet transmission, whereas masks are one of the most effective measures for source control of **both** aerosols and droplets. Therefore, masks best promote both safety and in-person learning by reducing the need for physical distancing. Additionally, under the new guidance from the CDC, universal masking also permits modified quarantine practices under certain conditions in K-12 settings, further promoting more instructional time for students.”*

(COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year, 7/12/21)

Updated 8-3-21

On campus, masks are optional for all when outdoors.

As mandated by the CDPH, all students and adults are required to mask indoors, with exemptions per [CDPH face mask guidance](#). Persons exempted from wearing a face covering 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. In limited situations where a face covering 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 can be used instead of a face covering while in the classrooms.

Persons without a mask will be provided with one. The school will initiate a restorative process for students refusing to wear a mask. This process would include:

#### Step 1 - Verbal Prompting and Encouragement

The process begins with verbal prompting and encouragement from the teacher or direct supervisor.

#### Step 2 - Informal Conference

If the student consistently refuses after prompting, the student will be referred to a counselor or administrator. During this informal conference, the counselor or administrator will seek to understand the reasons for refusal, review masking requirements and purpose, and discuss options to promote compliance. Options may include mask breaks, increased outdoor learning options, and counseling.

#### Step 3 - Formal Conference

If the student continues mask refusal, a parent/student/administrator conference will be conducted to discuss additional options which may include independent study.

#### Step 4 - Independent Study

Students who refuse to wear a mask while indoors will be referred to an appropriate independent study program.

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## Physical Distancing

Consistent with CDPH and CDC guidance, in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. As such, while mask wearing remains compulsory in indoor settings, no physical distancing standards are required.

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## Ventilation

Staff are encouraged to introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors where practicable and facilitating opportunities for outdoor learning opportunities. Air conditioning settings are maximized to introduce fresh air. MERV-13 air filters and air filtration systems are checked and replaced every three months to ensure optimal air quality. The District is in the process of replacing all HVAC units to improve air quality and flow.

Updated 8-3-21

Additionally, all classrooms are equipped with medical-grade Hathaspace air purification systems that replace the air in classrooms every hour, removing 99% of common air pollutants like pollen, mold, dust, bacteria, and viruses.

On school busses, students and adults remain masked with windows (at least two fully) open to improve airflow.

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## **Testing**

SPUSD is researching on-campus diagnostic COVID-19 testing options. Additional information will be added here if/when a testing program is established.

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## **Case Reporting & Contact Tracing**

To ensure the plan is both followed and updated accordingly, the following SPUSD COVID-19 Liaisons have been designated to receive reports, address concerns, lead training exercises, revise plans, and respond to incidents, including the coordination, documentation, communication, and tracking of possible exposure:

Mark Burroughs, Superintendent/Principal  
[mark.burroughs@sanpasqualunion.net](mailto:mark.burroughs@sanpasqualunion.net)

Tammy Lee, Assistant Principal  
[tammy.lee@sanpasqualunion.net](mailto:tammy.lee@sanpasqualunion.net)

Maria Aguiano, Health and Attendance Clerk  
[maria.anguiano@sanpasqualunion.net](mailto:maria.anguiano@sanpasqualunion.net)

Consistent with the requirements of AB 86 (2021) and California Code Title 17, section 2500, SPUSD reports school-related COVID-19 cases to the local public health department and assists in contact tracing efforts. The District also reports all positive COVID-19 cases of students and staff to the school community via the SPUSD COVID-19 Dashboard located on the school's website at [www.sanpasqualunion.net](http://www.sanpasqualunion.net).

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## **Quarantine & Isolation**

QUARANTINE keeps someone who was in "close contact" with someone who has COVID-19 away from others. "Close contact" is defined as being within six feet of a COVID positive person for 15 minutes or more. Quarantines generally last between 10-14 days.

ISOLATION keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home. Isolation typically lasts 10 days since symptom onset or a positive test result (if asymptomatic).

### Quarantine Requirements

The [COVID-19 K-12 Decision Tree](#) is a co-effort between the San Diego County Office of Education and San Diego County Public Health. It is updated to match ever changing CDC and CDPH guidance. SPUSD uses the [Decision Tree](#) to make decisions on how to handle students or staff members who show symptoms of COVID-19 or considered a “close contact” with a COVID-19 patient.

The most current version of the [Decision Tree](#) can be accessed at:

<https://covid-19.sdcoe.net/Portals/covid-19/Documents/Health%20Practices/COVID-19-Decision-Tree.pdf?updated=072721>

### Isolation Requirements

Both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons testing positive for COVID-19 must isolate as follows:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset; **AND**
- At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
- Other symptoms have improved

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## **Hand Hygiene**

Teachers and other staff will utilize hand hygiene best practice guidance as provided by the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html>) to teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes. All staff, including teachers, administrators, and recess/nutrition break/lunch duty supervisors, will promote hand washing throughout the day, especially before and after eating. The District maintains adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, and hand sanitizers for staff and children. All entrances and classrooms are equipped with hand sanitizer.

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## **Cleaning & Disinfecting**

As noted by the CDPH, “. . . *cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential viruses that may be on surfaces. Disinfecting (using disinfectants on the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency COVID-19 list](#)) removes any remaining germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection.*”

All classrooms and common spaces are cleaned and disinfected daily. Electrostatic sprayers are used daily by trained custodial staff following [CDC guidelines](#). Cleaning and sanitation schedules are posted in classrooms, bathrooms, and other common areas.

Teachers, drivers, and other staff members are provided with appropriate supplies to support disinfection of frequently touched surfaces during the day. Specifically, the District utilizes [Lotus Pro High Capacity Cleaning Systems](#) to provide a [safe](#) and [effective](#) method to sanitize learning areas, workspaces, and common areas throughout each day. Teachers and lunch/playground supervisors check out clean microfiber cleaning cloths and Lotus Pro spray bottles daily. Further, all classrooms are equipped with paper towels, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes, with nearly all classrooms equipped sinks with soap and running water.

When cleaning and disinfecting, special attention is paid to high-touch surfaces. Specifically, those surfaces include but are not limited to:

- Door handles
- Light switches
- Sink handles
- Bathroom surfaces
- Tables
- Student Desks
- Chairs

As recommended by the CDE, areas occupied by a person sick with COVID-19 within the prior 24 hours will be cleaned AND disinfected prior to reusing that area.

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## **Nutrition Service**

As noted by the CDPH, *“given very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals.”* The District will continue to clean frequently touched surfaces, especially those that come in contact with food. Additionally, tables and other eating surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized before and after meals.

Weather permitting, students will eat meals outdoors. Additional seating areas promote physical distancing while eating.

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