

Union School District

Reopening Frequently Asked Questions

2020-2021

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Enrollment in Distance Learning or In-Person Learning (Stages 3 - 5)

When can families communicate their firm choice for distance learning or in-person learning?

Prior to the start date for in-person learning, an official survey will be sent to families to determine each family's choice for distance learning or in-person learning.

Will families be notified with additional details about distance learning or in-person learning prior to filling out the survey?

Yes.

Will the number of instructional minutes change once in-person instruction begins?

The daily instructional minutes for each grade level will not change. Students will receive instruction through a combination of direct instruction (whether in-person or through live and recorded video), small group instruction through distance learning and/or in-person, and independent assignments.

- 3 hours per day for kindergartners.
- 3 hours, 50 minutes for grades 1-3.
- 4 hours for grades 4-8.

Will a student stay with their current teacher(s) when the district transitions to in-person learning? Will they stay with their current teacher if a family selects distance learning?

Efforts will be made to keep as many students with their current teacher as possible. There is no guarantee however that a student will stay with their current teacher, whether in-person or distance learning. Balancing classes will be necessary in order to maintain small, stable cohorts and follow physical distancing safety protocols and may result in a change of teacher.

If a family has multiple students in the same school, will they have the same schedule?

Schools will consider siblings in hybrid schedule enrollment decisions.

Can families request enrollment in a cohort with consideration to established friend "pods" outside of school?

Social "pods" will not be a part of in-person learning cohorts.

If we've chosen distance learning, can we choose in-person learning later in the school year?

In order to comply with the current State and County health and safety requirements, we are asking parents to commit to their choice for the remainder of the school year.

Once a family chooses in-person learning, can they change their mind before school starts and return to distance learning? After school starts?

In order to comply with the current State and County health and safety requirements, we are asking parents to commit to their choice for the remainder of the school year. Should circumstances change and a family wishes to switch back to distance learning, they may contact their school principal to discuss the option. Please note, in order to accommodate the request, class placement may change.

Will students in distance learning remain at their own school site with a teacher from that school site, or will they potentially be doing distance learning with students across the district?

Every effort will be made to keep students at their own school site.

What are the meet-and-greets?

These are orientations or sessions for students to join their teacher on-campus for a brief time to learn safety procedures and engage in fun activities. Your school site principal will notify each school community regarding specific activities at each school site.

Will the Distance Learning Support Centers still be available when in-person learning begins?

Beginning February 22nd we will transition TK-2nd grade students participating in DLSC cohorts to in-person learning. 3rd-5th grade DLSCs will remain open. On March 8th, 3rd-5th grade students participating in DLSCs will transition to in-person learning as well.

If a student or cohort must quarantine, can they participate in distance learning? Will they have a different schedule?

If a class must quarantine, the cohort will shift to distance learning as an entire cohort to minimize disruption.

Can a student who is home sick participate in distance learning?

If a student is sick, we want them to rest and take the time to recuperate. Students and/or families can speak to their classroom teacher about making up assignments or lessons missed.

Will the district be in distance learning only after periods of potential community travel (e.g. school breaks)?

The California Department of Public Health has issued an [advisory](#) on essential and non-essential travel. Students who have traveled are strongly recommended but not required to quarantine for 10 days upon their return to California. Contact your school site regarding your specific situation should you have any questions about your student(s) return to school.

What will instruction look like during in-person learning?

In elementary schools, students will concentrate on community building, social emotional strategies and core academic subjects during the in-person instruction time. This will be followed with practice work that students may complete through packets or via online assignments. In the middle schools, students will complete their subject area assignments via Google Classroom. Instruction will look very similar to current distance learning, as teachers will be continuing to work with distance learning students while they are assisting students in their classrooms.

What about the emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)?

SEL will be of critical importance as students return to campus, both for those students returning and for those who continue with Distance Learning. It starts with recognizing that all students and staff members have experienced Covid-19 and school closures in a myriad of ways. Giving children autonomy, time for play, meaningful connections with others, listening carefully to their words and actions, and practicing gratitude are all actions that educators will take to address the social-emotional needs of children as we transition back to school.

On-Campus Health & Safety Procedures

What PPE is available for staff and students?

The district has a supply for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all students and staff through the end of the 2020-21 school year. Students and staff members may of course bring or wear a personal cloth or disposable face covering. School health clerks will supply replacements if needed throughout the school day. All staff members can request a weekly supply directly from the school health clerk.

Each staff member has the following available

- Cloth masks
- Surgical masks
- Face shield
- Gloves
- Hand sanitizer
- Sanitizing wipes

In addition, school health clerks maintain a supply of cloth and surgical masks for students.



When are face coverings required at school? What happens if there is a refusal to wear a face covering when it is required?

Masks will be required for all staff, with surgical masks being the recommendation. Masks may be taken off temporarily when eating or drinking or if alone in an office or classroom. Masks are required for all students in grades TK-8th grade except when eating or drinking outdoors. In certain circumstances (e.g. in special education programs, in DHOH programs, or students experiencing a medical emergency,) options other than a face mask may be utilized. Staff will make continuous effort with students about masks and may contact the parent if masks become problematic.

How will hand-washing be incorporated into the school day?

Students and staff are expected to maintain good hand hygiene throughout the day. Teachers will work with students on useful hand-washing techniques and build it into their back to school procedures. Students will utilize hand sanitizer before entering the classroom as well as before and after physical activity outdoors. Hand washing and hand sanitizing stations will be placed throughout the campus, and staff and students will have access to classroom sinks for cleaning.

How will additional, larger groups of students enter and leave campus?

Each site may designate different entry and exit points for cohorts. Staff will routinely monitor the check-in process to ensure that students follow proper distancing procedures as they enter campus. At the middle school level, students may be expected to go directly to their assigned classroom once arriving on campus in the morning.

Are volunteers allowed on campus or in classrooms?

In order to minimize the number of adults on campus, volunteers are not currently permitted in classrooms or on campus.

What physical distancing rules are in place on campus?

Staff is expected to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from other staff members at all times. Students are expected to maintain a minimum of 4 feet physical distance at the elementary level, including desks spaced a minimum of 4 feet apart. At the middle school level, students and staff are expected to maintain 6 feet physical distance at all times, as this remains one of the main mitigation strategies for older students.

What is a cohort?

Cohorting is a strategy in which students and staff are assigned a stable grouping. In all elementary schools, cohorts will be established to mitigate transmission of COVID-19. In middle schools, stable groups will be established in specific grade levels or classes within a hybrid schedule.

In addition to the teacher, may other adults (e.g. 1:1 aides) be part of a cohort?

Adults providing support services (i.e. 1:1 aides) may join a stable cohort to provide services, but they will maintain at least six feet of distance from all others in the cohort, to the extent practicable.

Can students participate in other activities outside of school if they are doing in-person learning?

When participating in in-person learning, students will be assigned stable group(s). While students are permitted to participate in activities outside of school (athletics, tutoring, clubs, etc.), we recommend parents and guardians follow all applicable rules as set by these organizations to minimize contacts.

Will each classroom have proper ventilation?

Each room has had their air filter changed to the MERV-13 (higher-rated than HEPA filters). The HVAC will run continuously to keep the fresh air moving into the classrooms. Doors and windows should be open for airflow as practicable. Custodial staff have identified which rooms have windows that cannot open and will be installing new windows at these locations by spring break.

Will the district use air-purifiers in schools?

The use of MERV-13 filters are shown as the most effective strategy in improving air quality in classrooms combined with opening doors and/or windows and continuously running HVAC systems. Maintenance and Operations staff will also install and use CO2 sensors to ensure the proper and timely circulation of fresh air. Similar to neighboring districts, we will utilize additional air purification options should a room be unable to be upgraded with a MERV-13 filter.

When will each classroom be cleaned? Will cleaning supplies be available in each classroom?

Custodial staff will be responsible for disinfecting classrooms daily. Each classroom will have a supply of additional cleaning supplies (e.g. wipes) to aid in additional cleaning of high-touch surfaces during the school day.

How will desks and tables be configured to ensure physical distancing?

Distance between student chairs or seating is at least 6 feet away from one another, except where 6 feet of distance is not possible after a good-faith effort has been made. If 6 feet of distance is not possible, under no circumstances should distance between student chairs or seating be less than 4 feet. Consideration taken for arranging desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.

Will Plexiglass dividers be used in classrooms? Can parents provide a divider for their child?

Plexiglass dividers will be provided to any staff member, upon request, for use in instruction.

COVID-19 Symptoms and Testing Management

Will staff members be tested for COVID-19 regularly?

Employees will be required to get a free COVID-19 test at their school site twice a month. The district uses Color Valencia Labs for staff on-site staff testing. Staff members may continue to work while waiting for test results if asymptomatic and getting a test as routine surveillance testing.

What happens when a student or staff member becomes ill while on campus?

Students or staff members who exhibit symptoms while on campus will be evaluated by the school Health Clerks. Parents/Guardians must pick up the student within 30 minutes and will receive instructions from the Health Clerks and District Nurse on next steps.

What processes are in place when parents call their child in sick?

Our school health staff will monitor student absences due to illness and follow up with families as needed.

Are students required to be tested for in-person learning?

No, students are not required to be tested for in-person learning. A negative test may be required to return to school if a student is symptomatic. Health Clerks will work with families to determine and inform when students may return to school.

What happens if a staff member or student tests positive? When can they return to school?

When a staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19, the student or staff member is sent home immediately and must isolate for 10 days. Members of the cohort may be categorized as close contacts and would need to quarantine for 14 days. The site and district administrators will notify all close contacts and advise on quarantine requirements. All close contacts will be advised of the [COVID-19 Positive Case Isolation Protocol](#).

Will a negative COVID-19 test be required for students or staff to return to school?

For COVID positive cases, a negative test is not required to return to school. Upon completion of the 10 day isolation AND 24 hours after resolution of fever AND an improvement in symptoms, they may return to school. If asymptomatic, isolate for 10 days after the date of the positive test. Close contacts require a negative COVID-19 test result AND the completion of the 10-day quarantine prior to returning to school.

How does the district determine whether a school or the district will close (move to distance learning for all students)?

The district will follow the protocols defined for school and district closure for Santa Clara County. A school closure will be triggered if the school population has 5% of students and staff test positive. The district will close all schools if two or more school sites (25% of 8 district sites) are closed.

Will the community be informed if there are positive cases in the district?

Close contacts of positive cases will be notified directly if there is a positive case of a staff member or student with instructions on quarantine procedures. The district publishes COVID-19 case data on the district website weekly.

Other Questions

What options are available for staff members who are at high-risk?

Human resources staff works with each staff member collaboratively to determine options.

Are there requirements for families or staff members returning from travel?

The California Department of Public Health has issued an [advisory](#) on essential and non-essential travel. Students who have traveled are strongly recommended but not required to quarantine for 10 days upon their return to California. Contact your school site regarding your specific situation should you have any questions about your student(s) return to school.

How will schools help students follow health and safety procedures?

Teachers, staff, and administration will teach students health and safety procedures through videos prior to returning to school and lessons and protocols once students return. Parents will receive school written health and safety guidelines prior to returning to school.

How can families help their child(ren) prepare for in-person learning?

Videos on handwashing, mask wearing, social distancing and other school procedures will be shared with students prior to returning to school.

What happens if a student forgets to bring their device for in-person learning?

Clean loaner devices will be available and then disinfected after use.