



Sierra Sands Unified School District

COVID-19

District Plan For All Elementary and Secondary Schools

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Implementation of COVID-19 School Plan

Sierra Sands Unified School District's goal is to prioritize the reopening of our schools as safely and as quickly as possible given the many known benefits of in-person learning. To enable this and assist schools with their day-to-day operations, it is important to adopt and implement actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 inside the school and out in the community. The district has utilized guidance documentation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Kern County Public Health Department (KCPHD), the California Department of Education (CDE) and Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS) to develop this district plan in conjunction with site administration. It is reasonable to expect that the protocols in this document will change as local conditions change. This plan will also be a part of each school's site safety plan.

Out of an abundance of caution, Sierra Sands USD will enforce all procedures that are recommended by the CDC and CDPH. In some cases, the district might choose to enforce stricter safety precautions than what is recommended if conditions worsen. Any general questions or concerns regarding the District's COVID-19 Safety Plan which will be implemented at every district site and facility should be directed to Bryan Auld, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and COVID-19 Safety Coordinator for Sierra Sands USD at 760-499-1620.



Health and Safety Protocols



Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to outline the procedures the school will follow as we return to campus to provide in-person support services and instruction.

The CDC and CDPH highly recommend that all eligible individuals get the COVID-19 vaccination and booster(s) if eligible because, according to their guidance, the vaccine is the single most effective way to slow the spread of COVID-19. Preventative measures such as sanitation and washing of hands, remain a defense against the spread of COVID-19 within schools and offices.

Face Coverings

Students in all grade levels TK-12 are no longer required to wear face coverings but it is highly recommended. Adults, including all staff, in TK-12 settings are also no longer required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students but it is highly recommended.



COVID-19 Testing

On August 11, 2021, the California Department of Public Health issued a two-part order that requires that school districts verify the vaccination status of their employees. Those employees who are not vaccinated or who cannot properly demonstrate that they are fully vaccinated must be tested at least once weekly. A person is considered fully vaccinated two or more weeks after receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine or two or more weeks after receiving a single dose vaccine. Booster shots are not required to be considered fully vaccinated. To demonstrate that the employee is fully vaccinated, he/she must provide a digital copy of his/her vaccination record or a digital QR code that displays specific information when scanned by a SMART Health card reader.

The district has developed a confidential record that is used to maintain verification of each employee's vaccination status. The record is maintained in the Human Resources office and can only be accessed by approved personnel. The document is updated as employees are hired.

Recent guidance from the CDPH indicates that antigen tests should be used including OTC antigen tests. As such, the district is currently in the process of transitioning how tests are administered and determining what is an appropriate method for collecting results.

District staff will be provided testing free of charge and during regular work hours for any employee who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19. Staff and students receive free OTC test kits upon request.



Hand Washing

Students and staff should wash their hands frequently. When staff or students are washing their hands, it is recommended that they use soap and water and rigorously rub fingers together for a minimum of 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer is recommended when soap and water are not available. Hand sanitizer, which contain at least 60% ethyl alcohol as recommended by the CDPH, will be available at multiple locations on each school site including each classroom.

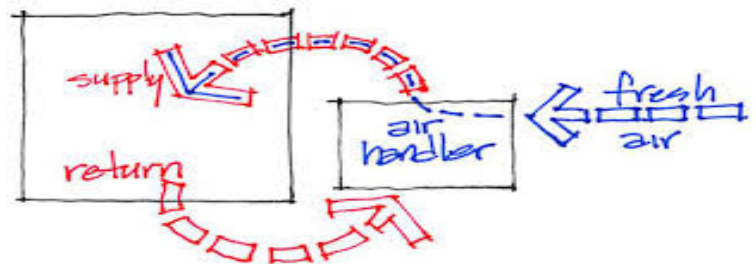
Students and staff should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the following times:

- Before and after eating
- After using the restroom

- After using a tissue to blow their nose or coughing into their hand

Coughing or Sneezing

All students and staff are reminded to use a tissue or the inside of their elbow as a barrier when coughing or sneezing. If a tissue is used, it must be disposed of immediately.



HVAC Ventilation and Air Purification

The district is committed to providing the safest equipment available for reducing the risk of transmission. Research has determined that the virus travels through ventilation systems that do not allow for high efficiency filters. The highest rated filtration system is the MERV 13 HVAC filter. Currently, every HVAC system in the district has a MERV 13 filter. In addition, and where necessary, the district will provide portable high efficiency air cleaners in each classroom.

What Families and Students Can Expect on Campus

Symptom and Exposure Screening

Note to Parents: Daily screening for COVID-19 symptoms and for exposure to someone with COVID-19 prior to leaving for school can prevent students with COVID-19 from coming to school while infectious, thus preventing in-school transmission.

If your student has any symptom(s) that are common in COVID-19, **DO NOT BRING THEM TO THE SCHOOL SITE.** Instead, keep your child home and contact the school's office manager for guidance on how to proceed. In addition, if there are other children in the home that are school aged, keep them home, initially, even if they are asymptomatic.

Quarantine Protocols & Exposures:

There is only one reason why a student would need to quarantine/isolate in the most current CDPH guidance: 1. If the student tests positive for COVID-19.

Please review the quarantine/isolation guidelines listed below:

Persons Who Test Positive for COVID-19

- Stay home for at least 5 days.
- Isolation can end after day 5 if symptoms are not present or are resolving (no fever) and a diagnostic specimen collected on day 5 or later tests negative.
- If unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are not present or are resolving, isolation can end after day 10.
- If fever is present, isolation should be continued until fever resolves.
- If symptoms, other than fever, are not resolving continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving or until after day 10.

Persons who are exposed to someone with COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status

- Exposed, asymptomatic students, may now continue in-person instruction and all other aspects of K-12 schooling, including sports and extra-curricular activities, regardless of vaccination status or exposure location.
- However, it is strongly recommended (not required) that exposed students:
 1. Wear a well-fitting mask indoors around others for at least 10 days following the date of last exposure
 2. Test 3-5 days following exposure

3. Monitor closely for symptoms
4. The updated guidance continues the testing exclusion for students who had COVID-19 within the last 90 days, but those students should still monitor for symptoms.
5. If testing positive, follow isolation recommendations above.

Contact Tracing Protocols

The Human Resources Department, in partnership with Kern County Department of Public Health (KCPH), will be responsible for managing the contact tracing protocols. As such, every COVID-19 positive case within the SSUSD community must be reported to H.R. Please contact the H.R. department by calling (760) 499-1620.



Transportation



Face coverings are no longer required for all students and employees during transportation activities but are highly recommended.

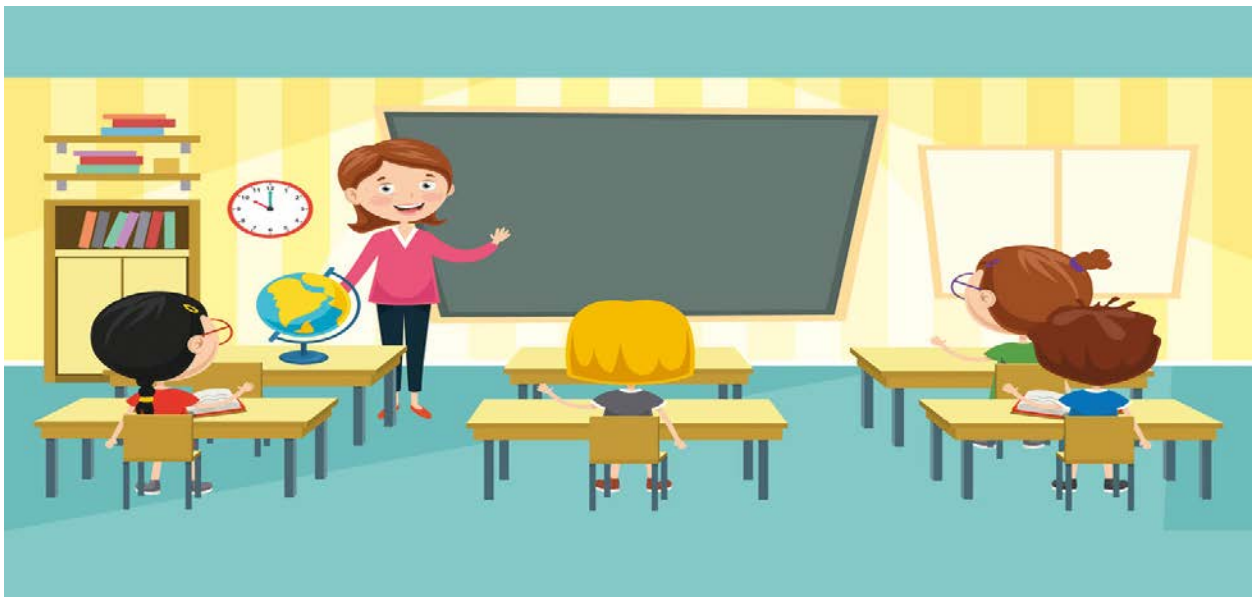
School buses will be cleaned and/or disinfected daily to protect student passengers and staff. In addition, the drivers use a hydroelectric sprayer to clean the bus ensuring all surfaces are cleaned.

Visitors/Volunteers on Campus:

The district values the role volunteers can play in a student's educational experience. With the current mandate changes it is the principal's discretion however to allow nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations onto their campus. As always, all volunteers/visitors should be approved by the site principal and must sign in at the front office.

Schools will not limit access for direct service providers but will ensure compliance with school visitor's policies.

Classroom Protocols



Classroom Space:

- Classrooms will be cleaned every day after students and staff have left.
- Manipulatives used for instruction will be stored in personal bins and are not to be shared.
- Backpacks are permitted.



Non - Classroom Space:

Recess activities will be staggered to reduce the number of students on the playground at any given time. Students will be required to thoroughly wash their hands immediately following the recess period.

Food Service



Please note, if your student has a medical need or food related allergy contact our Child Nutrition Services Director, Sue LeBlanc at 499-1881 or email her at sleblanc@ssud.org.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided by food services. Students will be allowed to bring their own bottled water.

The district will implement the following CDPH guidance regarding food services:

- Maximize physical distance as much as possible while eating (especially indoors). Using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating such as classrooms or the gymnasium can help facilitate distancing. Arrange for eating outdoors as much as possible.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be cleaned before and after meals.
- 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 packed meals.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols



The district will implement the following CDPH guidance regarding cleaning:

- In general, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential virus that may be on surfaces. Disinfecting removes any remaining germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection. The cleaning agent the district uses for everyday cleaning has a disinfectant in it.
- If a facility has had a sick person with COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, clean AND disinfect the spaces occupied by that person during that time. Again, the district uses a cleaning agent that is also a disinfectant every day.

Mental Health Support/Additional Family Resources



*Safeguard Your Kids
Mental Health*

Purpose

The following are social, emotional, and mental health resources available for our students and families. We welcome and encourage anyone who may be struggling or know of someone who is, to reach out for support. We are all stronger together.

Mental Health Supports:

Please contact your school principal or school counselor if any mental health support is needed.

Additional Supports

This year has been extremely difficult for people of all ages due to the many uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Many Californians are out of work and under serious financial stress. Children are partaking in virtual learning, which has come with unforeseen challenges and setbacks. **Parents Anonymous®** offers a NO COST Parent and Youth Helpline which provides immediate emotional support from a trained and compassionate helpline counselor. Open 12 hours every day: Monday-Sunday 8 am – 8 pm CALL, TEXT OR CHAT in any language.




**California
Parent & Youth
Helpline**
1-855-4A PARENT
1-855-427-2736

8am-8pm Monday-Sunday

CALL, TEXT OR LIVE CHAT NOW
FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT OR TO
SIGN UP FOR ONLINE PARENTING
SUPPORT GROUPS

caparentyouthhelpline.org
info@caparentyouthhelpline.org

Asking for Help is a Sign of Strength®



**California
Parent & Youth
Helpline**
1-855-4A PARENT
1-855-427-2736

8am-8pm Lunes-Domingo

LLAME, ENVÍE UN MENSAJE DE TEXTO O CHATEE
EN VIVO AHORA PARA RECIBIR APOYO
EMOCIONAL O PARA REGISTRARSE EN
GRUPOS VIRTUAL DE APOYO PARA PADRES

caparentyouthhelpline.org
info@caparentyouthhelpline.org

Pedir Ayuda Es Un Signo De Fortaleza®

Crisis Stabilization Unit

760-463-2880, 1141 Chelsea St.

College Community Health (for students with MediCal)

760 499-7406, 1400 N. Norma St. #133

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Clinic Mental Health

760 499-3863, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Southern Sierra Mental Health

760-446-6404, 105 E. Sydnor

Resources for Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, please call the Kern County Child Abuse Hotline.

Child Protective Services Hotline:

(661) 631-6011 (County)

(760) 375-6049 (Ridgecrest)

Substance abuse

College Community Services Adolescent Substance Use Disorder Treatment Team (12 to 17 years old)

760 499-7406, 1400 N. Norma Ste. 127-133

Ridgecrest Health Resources:

Pediatricians/Family practice

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Pediatrics

760 499-3846, Suite 301, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Immunizations

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Pediatrics

760 499-3846, Suite 301, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Urgent Care

Heather Stone Urgent Care

760 446-4571, 900 N Heritage Dr Ste E

Rural Health Clinic Urgent Care

760 499-3800, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Emergency Care

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies, 1081 N. China Lake Blvd.

Dentists

Bachman Family Dentistry

760 375-8512, 700 N. Sanders St. Ste B

Children's Dental Group

760 446-8688, 501 W Joyner Ave #B

Palm Tree Pediatric Dentistry

760 463-9006, 1101 N Norma St, Suite B

Rural Health Dental Clinic

760 499-3296, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Hearing

High Desert Audiology

760-375-9399, 121 S. China Lake Blvd Ste. B

Vision

VisionCare

760 446-5555, 1409 N Norma St.

Focus Optometry Center

760 375-9709, 905 Drummond Ave.

Walmart Vision Center

760 463-6058, 201 E Bowman Rd.

Orthopedics

Healthy Bone & Joint Center

760 446-8692, 1041 N. China Lake Blvd.

Valley Orthopedic Institute (in Ridgecrest on Thursdays)

661 949-8643, 1533 North Downs Street

Pharmacies

Center Pharmacy

760 446-4141, 1109 N. China Lake Blvd.

Rite Aid

760 375-0223, 101 North China Lake Blvd.

Sav-on at Albertsons

760 384-4020, 927 S China Lake Blvd.

Walgreens

760 384-2358, 101 Drummond Ave.

Physicals/Sports physicals

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Pediatrics

760 499-3846, Suite 301, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Sports Medicine/Chiropractic

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Chiropractic Clinic

760 371-1300, 840 N. Norma St., Suite B

Ledesma Chiropractic Sports Medicine

760 499-2367

Women's Health

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Women's Health Services

760 499-3640, 1011 N. China Lake Blvd., Suite A

Ridgecrest Pregnancy Care Center

760 384-2273, 341 Ridgecrest Blvd

Women's Center High Desert

760 371-1969, 134 China Lake Blvd