



August 10, 2020

Dear District Superintendent, Charter School Director, or Private School Head of School:

On July 9, 2020, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) placed Placer County on its monitoring list. On July 17, 2020 Governor Gavin Newsom announced that if a county has been on the monitoring list within the prior 14 days, a school must conduct distance learning only, until the county has been off the monitoring list for at least 14 days.

In counties on the monitoring list, CDPH guidance allows a district superintendent, private school principal/head of school, or executive director of a charter school (hereinafter superintendent) to apply for a waiver from the local health officer to open an elementary school for in-person instruction. This waiver is applicable only for grades TK-6, even if the grade configuration at the school includes additional grades.

When applying for the waiver, the superintendent must submit to the local health officer evidence of (1) consultation with labor and parent organizations and (2) publication of the elementary school reopening plans on the website of the local educational agency (or equivalent).

The local health officer then reviews the application and reopening plan (along with local community epidemiological data), makes a determination whether to grant or deny the waiver, and consults with CDPH regarding that determination. Elementary schools in counties on the monitoring list within the prior 14 days may not open for in-person instruction until they have received approval of a submitted waiver from the local health officer.

In order to apply for a waiver, please complete and submit the attached Application Cover Form. An application must contain:

- Attestation that the superintendent (or equivalent or designated staff) has consulted with all parent and labor organizations at each school site for which an application is being submitted. If no labor organization represents the school site staff, consultation with school site staff is sufficient.
- Confirmation that elementary school reopening plans have been published on the website of the local educational agency (or equivalent). Reopening plans must address the components in the CDPH guidance for schools and school-based programs (this guidance was revised on August 3; be sure to reference the latest version).

Applications and all supporting documents should be submitted to the local health officer via email (schoolinfo@placer.ca.gov) at least 14 days prior to the desired reopening date. We will strive to review and provide a response within 7 days of submission, yet turnaround time may be affected by a large number of applications received.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Aimee Sisson".

Aimee Sisson, MD, MPH
Health Officer and Public Health Director
Placer County Health and Human Services Department

Waiver Application Form

(for use by a Local Education Agency or equivalent)

Please submit one application for each local educational agency or equivalent. If applying on behalf of a school district, please submit one application for elementary schools in the district that are seeking to reopen for in-person instruction. If applying for an independent, private, faith-based, or charter school, please submit an application for each school.

Background Information

Name of Applicant (Local Educational Agency or Equivalent): _____

School Type:

Traditional Public School

Charter School

Private, Independent, or Faith-Based School

Number of Schools: _____ (Attach list of schools if >1) Enrollment: _____

Superintendent (or Equivalent) Name: _____

Address: _____

Grades/Number of Students Proposed to be Reopened:

TK	K	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Date of Proposed Reopening: _____

Name and Title of Person Completing Application:

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

By signing below, I _____, hereby attest that I am duly authorized to sign and act on behalf of _____. I certify that _____ is following the CDPH and Cal/OSHA guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and that the information provided in this application is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I or a designee have consulted with labor/staff and parent and community organizations about this reopening waiver application, and that my school/district's Reopening Plan is publicly posted on our website. I acknowledge that I remain responsible for implementing the Reopening Plan and that Placer County Public Health, by providing technical guidance, is in no way assuming liability for its contents.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I. Consultation

Please confirm consultation with the following groups:

Labor Organization(s)

Name of organization(s): _____

Date(s) consulted: _____

How consultation was conducted:

Email or letter Phone call In-person/virtual meeting Other: _____

Outcome of Consultation:

Opposed to reopening (describe below) Neutral about reopening

___ Supportive of reopening Other: _____

If the labor organization is opposed to or expressed reservations regarding reopening, describe their concerns here, and how these concerns have been addressed in the reopening plan. Attach additional documentation if needed.

If no labor organization represents staff at the school, please describe the process for consultation with school staff as well as the outcome of consultation. Attached additional documentation if needed:

Parent and Community Organization(s)

Name of organization(s): _____

Date(s) consulted: _____

How consultation was conducted:

Email or letter Phone call In-person/virtual meeting Other: _____

Outcome of Consultation:

Opposed to reopening (describe below) Neutral about reopening

___ Supportive of reopening Other: _____

If Parent and Community Organization(s) is opposed to or expressed reservations regarding reopening, describe their concerns here, and how these concerns have been addressed in the reopening plan. Attach additional documentation if needed.

II. **Elementary School Reopening Plans**

Please confirm that elementary school reopening plan(s) addressing the following, consistent with guidance from the California Department of Public Health and Placer County Public Health, have been published on the website of the local educational agency (or equivalent):

Website address: _____

Please provide the corresponding page number from your Reopening Plan where each section is addressed.

- Cleaning and Disinfection:** How shared surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected and how use of shared items will be minimized. Page(s)_____
- Cohorting:** How students will be kept in small, stable, groups with fixed membership that stay together for all activities (e.g., instruction, lunch, recess) and minimize/avoid contact with other groups or individuals who are not part of the cohort. The smaller the cohort, the fewer people who will need to quarantine after a case is identified, and the fewer people who could be infected by the initial case. Page(s)_____
- Entrance, Egress, and Movement Within the School:** How movement of students, staff, and parents will be managed to avoid close contact and/or mixing of cohorts. Page(s)_____
- Face Coverings and Other Essential Protective Gear:** How CDPH's face covering requirements will be satisfied and enforced, including how noncompliance will be addressed. Page(s)_____
- Health Screenings for Students and Staff:** How students and staff will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and how ill students or staff will be separated from others and sent home immediately. Page(s)_____
- Healthy Hygiene Practices:** The availability of handwashing stations and hand sanitizer, and how their use will be promoted and incorporated into routines. Page(s)_____

- Identification and Tracing of Contacts:** Actions that staff will take when there is a confirmed case. Confirm that the school(s) have designated staff persons to support contact tracing, such as creation and submission of lists of exposed students and staff to the local health department and notification of exposed persons. Each school must designate a person for the local health department to contact about COVID-19. Page(s)_____
- Physical Distancing:** How space and routines will be arranged to allow for physical distancing of students and staff. If distancing of 6 feet is not possible between students and between students and staff, describe how protective barriers will be utilized. Page(s)_____
- Staff Training and Family Education:** How staff will be trained and families will be educated on the implementation and enforcement of the plan. Page(s)_____
- Testing of Students and Staff:** How school officials will ensure that students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be rapidly tested and what instructions they will be given while waiting for test results. Rapid testing is defined as specimen collection within 48 hours of symptom onset and test results within 72 hours of receipt by the laboratory; specimen collection within 24 hours and test results within 48 hours are preferable.¹ If available testing turnaround times fall outside this range, describe how your school is planning to access another method to rapidly test students and staff. Schools may wish to consider contracting directly with a laboratory for specimen collection and testing support. Describe how staff will be tested periodically to detect asymptomatic infections. Page(s)_____
- Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning:** The criteria the superintendent will use to determine when to physically close the school/district and prohibit in-person instruction. Page(s)_____
- Please note CDPH has outlined thresholds for closure when there are multiple cases in multiple cohorts at a school or when at least 5% of the total number of teachers/student/staff are cases within a 14-day period, depending on the size and physical layout of the school. See [framework](#).
 - CDPH also indicates a superintendent should close a school district if 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days.
 - These thresholds should be considered when determining cohort size. Consider a school with a total population (students and staff) of 500, such that 5% of the school population is 25 persons. With a cohort size of 30, a single case with wide transmission within their cohort could create enough cases to prompt closure. With a cohort size of 15, multiple cases

¹ Tracking COVID-19 in the United States. Resolve to Save Lives. Available at <https://preventepidemics.org/covid19/resources/indicators/>

in multiple cohorts, with wide transmission within each cohort, would be needed to prompt school closure.

Communication Plans: How the superintendent will communicate with students, staff, and parents about cases and exposures at the school, consistent with privacy requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA. Page(s)_____

Additional Resources:

CDPH and Cal/OSHA Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs

<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-schools.pdf>

California Department of Education Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/strongertogether.asp>

CDPH COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Schools%20Reopening%20Recommendations.pdf>