



## AMADOR COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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### **Family FAQ: Transition to In-Person Learning During COVID-19** **9-24-2020**

**[Updated 10-8-2020 with Questions from Town Hall Meetings](#)**

**As we plan for returning to school buildings for in-person learning in a hybrid model, families will need to decide which option works best for each student. This FAQ document is designed to help families understand each option in order to make a decision. This is a living document that will be updated and adjusted to address questions related to adding a hybrid model of instruction. Please be aware that some questions are not complete and we are awaiting more information.**

#### **Will there be an option for families who want to continue with distance learning?**

Yes. All students will be assigned to the hybrid model as the default; however, there will be an opportunity for families to opt in to distance learning through an enrollment form.

#### **How do I sign up for the option I want?**

All students will be assigned to the hybrid model as the default; however, there will be an opportunity for families to opt in to distance learning through an enrollment form which will be provided during the week of October 5, 2020.

#### **What is a “Hybrid Model” and what will it look like?**

A hybrid model means that students are divided into two groups where one group attends for in-person instruction on certain days and times during the week and the other group attends for in-person instruction on different days and times. Students are given assignments to complete at home during the time they are not at school for in-person instruction. [At the elementary, junior high and high school levels, students will attend two full days per week \(Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday\).](#)

#### **Will anything change for my student when the transition happens?**

Because staffing will need to be adjusted in order to offer two learning options, [elementary](#) students may be assigned new teachers.

#### **If my junior high or high school student chooses distance learning, will he/she have access to the same courses as they would in the hybrid model?**

[Yes, cameras will be used in junior high and high school classrooms allowing students whose families select distance learning to remain with their current teachers in their current classes.](#)

We will not use the online Edgenuity platform as the only option for junior high and high school distance learning, although some teachers may continue to use it as a resource. With this model of distance learning, it will be extremely important for junior high and high school students to be logged into the live instruction every day for each class in which they are enrolled.

**Can I change my mind after making my initial learning model selection?**

Due to the nature of staffing and the need to rearrange classes to offer distance learning and the hybrid model, elementary students will need to commit to their learning model for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. [At the secondary level, there is flexibility due to instruction being provided simultaneously in both models.](#)

**Can my children all be on the same schedule for in-person instruction?**

We will make every effort to keep siblings and students within the same household on the same schedule.

**How will the in-person cohorts be created?**

In order to keep the school as balanced as possible, all classes will be split in two cohorts (two sections per period) by the first letter of the student's last name.

**Can students change their cohort?**

No. Due to staffing assignments being based on the number of students in each cohort, we will not be able to accommodate cohort changes.

**Will the Extended Learning Program (ELP) be available for child care?**

Yes, ELP will be available for as many elementary students as we can accommodate. Please email [elp@acusd.org](mailto:elp@acusd.org) or call 257-5423 for more information.

**Do students need to wear masks and stay 6 feet apart when attending in-person instruction?**

Yes. In order to offer in-person instruction, we are required to follow the guidance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) for wearing masks and 6 foot distancing.

**What do we do if someone isn't wearing a face covering?**

According to the CDPH, students in grades 3-12 and all staff are required to wear a face covering and students in grades TK-2 are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering. Students not complying with the facemask requirement will be excluded from attending in-person instruction and assigned to full-time distance learning.

**What is a daily health screening and will my child be required to do this?**

The CDPH guidance requires daily health screenings for all students and staff coming to school for in-person instruction before proceeding to classrooms. The daily health screening consists of a temperature check and some questions about symptoms.

**Will masks be available at school for my student?**

We encourage families to send students with their own mask; however, masks will be available for any student or staff member that needs one.

**How will this affect my student's IEP, 504 plan or English learner support?**

All IEP services and 504 accommodations will continue to be provided according to the student's emergency service plan. Designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD) will continue for English learners.

**Will transportation be available?**

Yes, but transportation will be limited to areas furthest from schools.

**Will my student be able to get breakfast and lunch?**

Yes, breakfast and lunch will continue to be available for students throughout the year. It will be served "grab and go" style.

**When will students know what cohort they are in?**

We plan to share information with families regarding cohort assignments during the week of October 19, 2020 in order to give families time to plan. A message will be sent from the school to each cohort.

**What protective measures will be in place to prevent the spread of germs?**

All classrooms and common areas will be disinfected on a regular basis throughout the school day. Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom and common area for student and staff use. Hand washing stations will be available in addition to the existing sinks in classrooms and bathrooms. Deep cleaning will be done before or after school hours and on Wednesdays.

**What is the protocol for dealing with sick kids showing COVID symptoms?**

Per the [Health and Safety Plan During COVID-19 for a Safe Return to School](#):

Individuals who have symptoms of illness must be immediately separated to prevent possible transmission of disease to others. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility depending on the severity of their symptoms. **Sick students and sick staff must:**

- Be quickly separated from other students/staff until picked up by parent/guardian
- Maintain more than 6 feet of distance from others, preferably in a separate room that is well ventilated
- Wear a disposable mask
- Attending staff must use standard precautions when assisting a sick individual. For suspected COVID-19 this includes, disposable face mask, face shield, and gloves
- Call parent/guardian for immediate pick up
  - If a parent/guardian cannot pick up students, consider procedures for arranging transportation to their home

- Provide parent/guardian or staff member with Stay at Home/When to Return to School instructions
- Disinfect all surfaces after the student/staff leaves and before use by others
- If COVID-19 is suspected, contact your school nurse or Human Resources. Follow Communicable Disease Response Protocols for notifying Human Resources for possible outbreaks of infectious disease.

### **What is the protocol when a person (student or staff) tests positive for COVID?**

The protocol for quarantines are based on the details provided on page 3 of the [California Department of Public Health's COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year](#) released on July 17, 2020 and the [Amador County Public Health Protocols for the Onset of Symptoms, Potential Exposure to and/or close Contact with an Individual Testing Positive for COVID-19 in a School Classroom/Cohort Setting](#) documents.

A brief summary of this guidance is:

- **Scenario 1: Symptoms.** Send the student or staff member home. Not a closure.
- **Scenario 2: Close Contact.** If a family member or close contact tests positive, send report to school administrator, contact public health, send student or staff member home. Not a closure.
- **Scenario 3: Student or staff member tests positive.** Individual self-reports, family quarantine for at least 14 days. Closure of cohort (or class) for 14 days and immediate shift to distance learning.
- **Scenario 4: Negative test after 1, 2, or 3 above.** Students or staff may return 3 days after symptoms resolve, unless in contact with a positive family member, then 14 day quarantine. Not a closure.
- Entire school closure comes into play if a student or staff member tests positive and there has been significant mixing or contact with other students in other cohorts. This is why keeping cohorts together with no mixing <sup>1</sup>to the greatest extent practicable is critical.

### **Update from the 9/29/2020 and 10/1/2020 Town Hall Meetings**

#### **Will teachers working in the hybrid model use a camera so my children can remain in distance learning?**

In order to ensure high school students stay on track for graduation and have full access to college prep (CP) courses, advanced placement (AP) courses, and courses not available through the Edgenuity online learning platform, and in response to feedback received from families and teachers, cameras will be used at the junior high

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and high school levels. Due to the nature of elementary education (more movement, more hands-on experiences, etc.), cameras will not be used at the elementary level.

**Can I change my mind about the learning model if I learn later that my child's teacher is going to change?**

Principals will work with their families and make every effort to accommodate special requests. This will not be possible in all cases.

**Can my child take AP courses in Distance Learning? Will a camera be an option?**

Yes, in order to ensure high school students stay on track for graduation and have full access to college prep (CP), advanced placement (AP) courses, and courses not available through the Edgenuity online learning platform, and in response to feedback received from families and teachers, cameras will be used at the junior high and high school levels.

**100% of the students are supported now in distance learning. How equitable is the distance learning option compared to the hybrid model?**

The same junior high and high school courses will be provided in distance learning as those offered in the hybrid model. For example, high school students will have full access to college prep (CP) courses and advanced placement (AP) courses, as cameras will be used in the classrooms so students at home will access the same instruction as students in the classroom.

**Will bussing be provided for all of the remote areas? What about families who live in Pioneer but go to school in Lone?**

We hope to accommodate all families needing transportation, with priority being given to families in remote areas. More information about this will be communicated as we get closer to November 16, 2020.

**How do high school cohorts get picked and will that work?**

School staff will work together to create the two cohorts in a way that allows for balanced schedules/class sizes and a comparable number of students on campus at one time for each cohort. Staff will begin by putting the students in the first half of the alphabet (first letter of the last name) in one cohort and students in the second half of the alphabet in the other cohort. Staff will make adjustments where possible to accommodate families' needs and requests.

**How are the schools identifying students to participate in the October 19 small learning cohorts? Can parents refer their child for this?**

School staff are using the guidance from CDE and CDPH to identify students to participate in the small learning cohorts designed to assist our students who are at greatest risk academically and/or socially-emotionally. This may include English learners, students with disabilities, foster youth, students who are performing far below grade level, students who have been chronically absent, etc. Parents may contact their child's teacher(s) or principal to inquire about participating in the small cohorts of in-person learning which will begin on October 19, 2020.

**Are students being told not to turn on their cameras? If so why?**

Students are not being told to turn off their cameras while in distance learning. If a parent/guardian is concerned about this, he/she is encouraged to contact the student's teacher.

**Can band students participate like student athletes who are engaged in conditioning?**

Yes, with principal approval and following the teacher's directions, the CDC guidelines, and the CDPH guidelines, band students may participate in marching or conditioning type drills or exercises. Band students may not practice with their wind instruments until permitted to do so by the Amador County Public Health Officer.

**How will the Special Education schedule work in the hybrid model to make sure my student with an IEP receives his/her services and support?**

The emergency services plan (also called the distance learning plan), which was planned and agreed to in a meeting with the IEP team, is to be implemented during any type of emergency such as a pandemic, power safety shut off event, wild fire, etc. The plan should be followed and implemented within the hybrid model to ensure students with disabilities receive the necessary services and support as written in the emergency services plan.

**What support will be provided for families that have children on multiple campuses?**

School staff will work together to align hybrid schedules for students in the same family who are at multiple school campuses, to the extent possible. Child care will continue to be available through the Extended Learning Program (ELP).

**What is the amount of time for school in the hybrid? How does that meet the minimum instructional minutes requirements?**

The combination of time spent attending the in-person instruction and completing assignments at home will be equal to or greater than the minimum state instructional minutes. The minimum instructional minutes are TK/K at 180 minutes, grades 1-3 at 230 minutes, grades 4-5 at 240 minutes, grades 6-8 at 240 minutes, and grades 9-12 at 240 minutes.

**How will students be supported between in-person learning sessions?**

Students will have the opportunity to schedule a time to meet with the teacher(s) for additional support during the teacher's office hours on Wednesdays.

**Can parents pick other elective courses in Edgenuity that parents pay for? Will the District be offering more courses.**

Edgenuity will no longer be used as the main learning platform for distance learning at the junior high school and high school level.

**What is the process when someone tests positive?**

Per the California Department of Public Health protocol, we will notify the local public health department and immediately isolate the student or staff member. The individual is excluded from school for 10 days from symptom onset or their COVID test date. Amador County Public Health identifies all close contacts. Contacts are required to quarantine at home (likely the entire cohort or class) for 14 days after the last date the student or staff member was present at school while infectious. Testing of all contacts is recommended with priority being given to symptomatic contacts. Negative test results will not shorten the 14-day quarantine. The classroom and primary spaces where the student or staff member spent significant time will be cleaned and disinfected. The school remains open.

**Will ELP be available for all families who need it? Is the program expanding to accommodate more students?**

The Extended Learning Program is available for families who need it, with staff being added as needed. We will accommodate families based on staff availability.