AGENDA
AMADOR COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, August 4th, 2021
CLOSED SESSION APPROXIMATELY 4:45 PM
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SELPA MEETING
OPEN SESSION APPROXIMATELY 5:45 PM

MASKS REQUIRED FOR UNVACCINATED INDIVIDUALS WHILE INDOORS

Meeting Location: Amador County Building, 810 Court Street, Jackson, CA

NOTE: A copy of the Board agenda and backup materials is available for inspection and review on the Amador County Unified School District Website at www.amadorcoe.org. An audio recording of the Board Meeting is made. If you are in need of a hard copy of the agenda, please email the Communication Specialist at adam.cranfill@acusd.org.

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1.0 CALL TO ORDER

2.0 BOARD MEMBERS
   [ ] Kandi Thompson, Board President
   [ ] Deborah Pulskamp, Board Clerk
   [ ] James Marzano
   [ ] Julia Burns
   [ ] James Whitaker

3.0 ROLL TAKEN BY THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNING BOARD

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION

The Board may not take action on any item which is not on this agenda, except when (1) an emergency situation exists, (2) there is need to take immediate action and the need for the action came after posting, or (3) the item was posted for a prior meeting within specified time limits. (Government Code §54954.2)
The Board may not take action on any item which is not on this agenda, except when (1) an emergency situation exists, (2) there is need to take immediate action and the need for the action came after posting, or (3) the item was posted for a prior meeting within specified time limits. [Government Code §54956.2]

5.0 CLOSED SESSION
5.1 Conference with Legal Counsel pursuant to Govt. Code section 54956.9—Anticipated Litigation Regarding COVID-19

6.0 RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION/REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION

7.0 ADDITIONS/DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

8.0 PRESENTATION AND RECOGNITION

9.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

10.0 EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS (Approximately 20 minutes)
10.1 Amador County Teachers Association (ACTA) (Mr. Hunkins)
10.2 California School Employees Association (CSEA) (Ms. Cramer)

11.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS (Approximately 20 minutes maximum)

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12.0 CONSENT AGENDA (Approximately 10 minutes)
The Board of Trustees received these items under separate cover as an addendum. Public copy available during regular Board meeting and on the district website.

12.1 Minutes
11.1a Board Meeting 7-21-21
11.2b Board Meeting 7-22-21

12.2 Personnel (Mr. Vicari)
12.2a Personnel Considerations

12.3 Business (Mr. Critchfield)
N/A

12.4 Educational Services (Mr. Snider)
N/A

12.5 Surplus
N/A

12.6 Miscellaneous (Dr. Gibson)
10.6a Back to School Night Dates
13.0 **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

13.1 **COVID-19 Health and Safety for the 2021-2022 School Year – Discussion/Action** (Dr. Gibson)

   a. Public Comment Submitted in Writing Prior to the Board Agenda Posting
   b. Public Comment In-person – Maximum of 20 minutes and no more than 3 minutes per speaker
   d. Amador County Public Health Department Update
   e. ACUSD COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan
   f. COVID-19 Masking Resolution

13.2 **Board Policy 6158 – Independent Study (update) – Discussion/Action** (Mr. Snider)
Policy updated to reflect **NEW LAW (AB 130, 2021)** which requires all districts, for the 2021-22 school year, to offer independent study to meet the educational needs of students unless a waiver is obtained and to adopt policy with specified components in order to generate apportionment for independent study.

14.0 **REPORTS**

14.1 **Report from Superintendent** (Dr. Gibson)
14.2 **Reports and Remarks from Board Members**

15.0 **NEXT MEETING**

**ACUSD Regular Meeting**: Wednesday, August 11, 2021, tentatively scheduled to be held at the Amador County Administration Building, 810 Court St., Jackson, CA. Open Session will start at 6:30 PM.

16.0 **ADJOURNMENT**

* The Amador County Unified School District complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should you require special accommodations, or more information about accessibility, please contact the Superintendent’s Office by calling (209) 257-5353. All efforts will be made for reasonable accommodations.

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AGENDA
AMADOR COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, July 21, 2021
OPEN SESSION 6:30 PM

Meeting Location: Amador County Building, 810 Court Street, Jackson, CA

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1.0 CALL TO ORDER 6:01 pm

2.0 BOARD MEMBERS
[X] Kandi Thompson, Board President
[X] Deborah Pulskamp, Board Clerk
[X] James Marzano
[ ] Julia Burns
[X] James Whitaker

3.0 ROLL TAKEN BY THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNING BOARD

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION
5.0 CLOSED SESSION
   5.1 Conference with Legal Counsel Regarding Existing Litigation pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) Government Code section 54956.9:
       Special Education Dispute, OAH Case No. 2021040696
   5.2 Special Education Settlement Agreement Review

6.0 RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION/REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION

7.0 ADDITIONS/DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

8.0 PRESENTATION AND RECOGNITION

9.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS (Approximately 20 minutes)
   A person wishing to be heard by the Board shall first be recognized by the president and shall then proceed to comment as briefly as the subject permits. Individual speakers shall be allowed three minutes to address the Board on non-agenda items. The Board shall limit the total time for public input on each item to 20 minutes. With Board consent, the Board president may increase or decrease the time allowed for public presentation, depending on the topic and the number of persons wishing to be heard. The president may take a poll of speakers for or against a particular issue and may ask that additional persons speak only if they have something new to add. NOTE: If you wish to address the Board please complete a speaker card and give it to the Board Clerk or Communications Specialist.

10.0 CONSENT AGENDA (Approximately 10 minutes)
   The Board of Trustees received these items under separate cover as an addendum. Public copy available during regular Board meeting and on the district website. The motion passed 5-0.

10.1 Minutes
   10.1a Board Meeting 6-23-21

10.2 Personnel (Mr. Vicari)
   10.2a Current Personnel Recommendations
   10.2b School Calendar
   10.2c Confidential Salary

10.3 Business (Mr. Critchfield)
   10.3a Warrants issued between: 6/18/21-7/12/21
   10.3b Payroll Dates
   10.3c Attendance Calendar

10.4 Educational Services (Mr. Snider)
   10.4a Williams Quarterly Report (April/May/June)

10.5 Surplus
   10.5a Independence High School – GE Gas Oven, outdated
   10.5b Independence High School – Crosley Dryer, outdated
   10.5c Independence High School – Crosley Washing Machine, outdated
   10.5d Independence High School – Frigidaire Electric Oven, outdated
   10.5e Maintenance – Ford 1947 Tractor, rusted and non-operable

10.6 Miscellaneous (Dr. Gibson)
11.0 DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

11.1 **Job Description– Discussion/Action** (Approximately 10 minutes) (Mr. Vicari)
The Administrative Assistant III/Dispatcher (Transportation) will provide administrative support during business hours and also provide dispatch support when needed while bus routes are in progress. **The motion passed 5-0.**

11.2 **Job Description– Discussion/Action** (Approximately 10 minutes) (Mr. Critchfield)
The Senior Payroll Technician will, under limited supervision of management, perform responsible and complex payroll computational accounting and clerical in preparation of all payrolls, including monthly, hourly, classified and certificated payrolls; assists and advises in the formulation, installation and revision of payroll record keeping procedures; and performs related work as required. **The motion passed 5-0.**

11.3 **AVID Contract – Discussion/Action** (Approximately 12 minutes) (Mr. Snider)
AVID's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students to succeed in education and global society. Regardless of their life circumstances, AVID students overcome obstacles and achieve success. They graduate and attend college at higher rates, but more importantly, they can think critically, collaborate, and set high expectations to confidently conquer the challenges that await them. **The motion passed 5-0.**

11.4 **Reducing Youth Access to and Use of Flavored Tobacco Products – Discussion/Action Resolution: 21/22-001** (Approximately 12 minutes) (Mr. Snider)
The FDA is working toward issuing proposed product standards within the next year to ban menthol as a characterizing flavor in cigarettes and ban all characterizing flavors (including menthol) in cigars. This decision is based on clear science and evidence establishing the addictiveness and harm of these products and builds on important, previous actions that banned other flavored cigarettes in 2009. Nexus Youth and Family Services helps with tobacco use prevention education each year in Amador County Public Schools. **The motion passed 5-0.**

11.5 **Leadership Associates Contract – Discussion/Action** (Approximately 12 minutes) (Dr. Gibson)
This contract allows Leadership Associates to assist the district in hiring a 1.0 FTE Director of Special Education/SELPA. The position has been posted since March, 2021 and two rounds of interviews have been held. Through panel interviews and cabinet meetings, the district has not found a candidate that fits our overall needs. We will begin the 2021/2022 school year with two part-time interim Directors to support the majority of our needs while we work to secure a candidate for board approval. As we have two part-time positions, we will not be paying out the full salary and benefits budgeted for the Director position which allows the district to utilize the services of Leadership Associates at no additional cost to the district’s bottom line. **The motion passed 5-0.**
11.6 **HVAC Bid Acceptance – Discussion/Action** (Approximately 10 minutes) (Mr. Critchfield)
All four secondary school gymnasiums are currently cooled by aging swamp coolers. Swamp coolers do not circulate, filter or cool the air as effectively as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems (HVAC). With increased priority and funding in regard to proper ventilation for all students and employees, it is important to move forward with replacing gymnasium swamp coolers with HVAC units. **The motion passed 5-0.**

12.0 **REPORTS**

12.1 **Report from Superintendent** (Dr. Gibson)
Superintendent Gibson begins by thanking the team for their aid in providing a smooth transition and warm welcome for her in the district. She recaps her meetings 1 on 1 with the principals of each school site and her attendance to the AVID social that occurred earlier. She thanks community members for their understanding of the transitional period and elaborates on the upcoming special board meeting on August 4th to discuss future COVID protocols at each school site. Thanks Steve Russel for being welcoming and accommodating to her as the other Superintendent.

12.2 **Reports and Remarks from Board Members**
(Board Member Whitaker) Welcomes the parents’ future public comments for this uncertain time in a pandemic, states the importance of voices being heard and explains how public comment will be limited to a 20-minute period.
(Board member Marzano) Encourages parents and community members to reach out to the School Board of Trustees with comments and concerns.
(Board Clerk Pulskamp) Thanks teachers in the district for continuing to participate in online training and recounts her own time as a teacher doing the online training in her own district that she works in. Exclaims her surprise at how many resources are now available for teacher and how adding another may be too much but may be necessary. She encourages staff and teachers to rest and relax and thanks them for doing more than usual during their vacation time.
(Board President Kandi Thompson) Thankful we can meet in person now and not on Zoom. Explains how Zoom was an avenue for public comment when in person meetings were not allowed. Thanks KVGC for their continued livestream of the meetings and encourages community members to return to the meeting on August 4th. Compliments the Union of teachers and classified staff and explains how the School Board is the voice of the students. She explains how she is grateful for all the public comments and states how it is important to hear from parents and students.

13.0 **NEXT MEETING**
ACUSD Regular Meeting: Wednesday, August 11, 2021, tentatively scheduled to be held at the Amador County Administration Building, 810 Court St., Jackson, CA. Open Session will start at 6:30 PM.

14.0 **ADJOURNMENT** 8:01 pm
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AGENDA
AMADOR COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Thursday, July 22, 2021
OPEN SESSION 6:30 PM

Meeting Location: Remote via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3035974998?pwd=R3JHSnBPek13U0lGWFdNUkphUWM4Zz09

Meeting ID: 303 597 4998
Passcode: 072020
One tap mobile
+16699009128,,3035974998#,,,,*072020#

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1.0 CALL TO ORDER 6:38 pm

2.0 BOARD MEMBERS
[X] Kandi Thompson, Board President
[ ] Deborah Pulskamp, Board Clerk
[X] James Marzano
3.0 ROLL TAKEN BY THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNING BOARD

4.0 ADDITIONS/DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

5.0 PRESENTATION AND RECOGNITION

6.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS (Approximately 20 minutes)
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7.1 CONSENT AGENDA (Approximately 10 minutes)
The Board of Trustees received these items under separate cover as an addendum. Public copy available during regular Board meeting and on the district website. The motion passed 3-0.

7.2 Misc. (Dr. Gibson)
7.1a Overnight Field Trip Requests
7.2b Authorization of Signatures

8.0 DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS
NONE

9.0 REPORTS
NONE

10.0 NEXT MEETING
ACUSD Regular Meeting: Wednesday, August 11, 2021, tentatively scheduled to be held at the Amador County Administration Building, 810 Court St., Jackson, CA. Open Session will start at 6:30 PM.

11.0 ADJOURNMENT 6:42 pm
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Amador County Public Schools

DATE: August 4, 2021

AGENDA ITEM #: 12.2

Motion: ____________________
Second: ____________________
Vote: ____________________

SUBJECT:
Human Resources Consent Agenda for August 4, 2021

CURRENT PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Certificated~ New Hire 2021-2022
Megan Gascon, Mild Moderate Teacher, .5 FTE, North Star Independent Study School
Kristin Cable, Mathematics Teacher, 1 FTE, Ione Junior High
Daniel McGee, Mild Moderate Teacher, .5 FTE, Jackson Junior High
Sheila Wakida, Mild Moderate Teacher, 1 FTE, Jackson Junior High
Kurt Muchow, Social Studies Teacher, 1 FTE, Jackson Junior High
Marcelle Montes, Elementary Teacher, 1 FTE, Pine Grove STEM Magnet School
George Peknik, Math Teacher, 1 FTE, Jackson Junior High
Christine Watson, Science Teacher, 1 FTE, Ione Junior High
Arianna Oneto, Elementary Teacher, 1 FTE, Pioneer VAPA Magnet School
George Peknik, Intervention Teacher, 1 FTE, Jackson Junior High
Christine Watson, Intervention Teacher, 1 FTE, Ione Junior High

Certificated~ Reduction in FTE
Thomas Priddy, English/Social Studies Teacher, 1 FTE, Amador High School to English/Social Studies Teacher, .667 FTE, Amador High School

Administrative~ New Hire
Terry Crumpacker, Director of Special Education/SELPA, 1 FTE, District Office

Certificated~ Voluntary Transfer 2021-2022
Erica Kantack, Elementary Teacher, 1 FTE, 193 days, Sutter Creek Elementary to Elementary Teacher, 1 FTE, 183 days, Sutter Creek Elementary

Certificated~ FTE Increased 2021-2022
Kelly Ward, Intervention Teacher, .6 FTE, Jackson Elementary to Intervention Teacher, 1 FTE, Jackson Elementary

Certificated ~ Temporary New Hire 2021-22
Arianna Oneto, Elementary Teacher, 1 FTE, Pioneer VAPA Magnet School
Certificated ~ Return From Leave of Absence
Mark Herberger, Social Studies Teacher, 1 FTE, Ione Junior High

Certificated ~ Voluntary Transfer 2021-2022 School Year, Effective August 9, 2021
Mary Allen, elementary teacher, .5 FTE, distance learning to .5 FTE, Sutter Creek Primary
Sarah Borba, elementary teacher 1 FTE, distance learning, to 1 FTE, Jackson Elementary
Lynda Burdick, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Ione Elementary
Paula Cahill, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Jackson Elementary
Lisa Carney, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Jackson Elementary
Kelly Churchhill, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Jackson Elementary
Maggie Frederick, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Jackson Elementary
Amanda Henry, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Sutter Creek Elementary
Carella Herberger, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Ione Elementary
Idamae Isotalo, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Sutter Creek Primary
Jeannette Jentzen, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Pioneer VAPA Magnet School
Lisa Neville-Segura, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Plymouth Elementary
Lance Outland, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Sutter Creek Elementary
Kevin Weyer, elementary teacher, 1 FTE, distance learning to 1 FTE, Sutter Creek Elementary
Hannah Wolcott, elementary teacher, .5 FTE, distance learning to .5 FTE, Sutter Creek Primary

Classified ~ Promotion
Shelbie Byrd, Food Service Worker I, 3.75 hours/11 months, Amador High School to Office Clerk, 6 hours/11 months, Ione Elementary School, effective August 9, 2021

Classified ~ Voluntary Lateral Transfer
Robin Yelinek, from Instructional Aide SPED, 6 hours/11 months Jackson Junior High to Instructional Aide SPED, 6 hours/11 months, Amador High School, effective August 10, 2021

Classified ~ Resignation
Jessica Vaughn, Recess-Yard Duty, 1.5 hours/11 months, Pioneer Elementary School, effective July 21, 2021

Classified ~ New Hire
Teri Wilson, Kindergarten Aide, 3.5 hours/11 months, Sutter Creek Primary, effective August 11, 2021
Wendy Kuhn, Office Clerk, 3.25 hours/11 months, Sutter Creek Elementary, effective August 9, 2021
Cindee Slater, Office Clerk, 6 hours/11 months, Ione Elementary School, effective August 9, 2021
Daniela Guzman-Aguirre, Campus Supervisor, 8 hours/11 months, Argonaut High School, effective August 11, 2021
Andrea Alderson, TK/K Instructional Aide, 3.5 hours/11 months, Sutter Creek Primary, effective August 11, 2021
Kiya Welker, TK/K Instructional Aide 3.5 hours/11 months, Jackson Elementary, effective August 11, 2021
Marisol Villa, TK/K Instructional Aide, 3.5 hours/11 months, Plymouth Elementary, effective August 11, 2021

RECOMMENDATION:
Approve Human Resources Consent Agenda

PRESENTED BY: David Vicari, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources & Labor Relations
Jackson Elementary
TK-K Monday Aug 9th 5:30-6:15 (for parents and students)
1st-5th Tuesday Aug 18th 6-6:30 & 6:30-7 (parents only)

Ione Elementary
Tuesday Aug 10th at 5:00

Sutter Creek Elementary
Tuesday Aug 17th  6:50-7:30
Primary: 6-6:40

Pine Grove Elementary
Tuesday Aug 17th

Plymouth Elementary
Tuesday Aug 17th 5:30 title 1 parent meeting
6-7 class visits
6:30pm -7pm ‘Above and Beyond’ a chance to meet with additional support staff, clubs, and parents
Choose from 6-630, 630-7

Pioneer Elementary
Tuesday Aug 17th 5-7:45pm

Amador HS
Monday August 23rd from 6-8 pm

Argonaut HS
Monday Aug 23 at 5:30pm

Ione Jr
Thursday Aug 19th 6:30

Jackson Jr
Wednesday Aug 18, at 5:45pm

Independence
Wednesday Aug 25th at 6pm
Community
Wednesday Aug 25th at 6pm
AGENDA ITEM #: 13.1

SUBJECT:
COVID-19 Health and Safety for the 2021-2022 School Year – Discussion/Action
   a) Public Comment Submitted in Writing Prior to the Board Agenda Posting
   b) Public Comment In-person – Maximum of 20 minutes and no more than 3 minutes per speaker
   d) Amador County Public Health Department Update
   e) ACUSD COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan
   f) COVID-19 Masking Resolution

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
   a) Parents and community members were asked to submit their public comments in writing regarding any COVID-19 health and safety protocols to the superintendent and Board of Trustees. The notice for written requests was sent on Tuesday, July 27, 2021 with all comments being included in this packet if received by Tuesday, August 3, 2021 at 2:00 PM. During open session, the Board will allow 20 minutes total for in person public comment as stated in the notice to parents and community members. See all submitted public comments attached.
   b) Public comment for in person speakers will be limited to no more than three minutes per person, for a total of 20 minutes for item 13.1.
   c) See attached updated guidance.
   d) See notice from Amador County Public Health Department, Dr. Rita Kerr.
   e) See formal DRAFT copy of proposed COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan attached.
   f) See COVID-19 Masking Resolution for formal Board approval.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:
N/A

RECOMMENDATION:
Superintendent Gibson recommends approving item 13.1.e with the Board determining Option A or B as noted on pages 3-8 of the Health and Safety plan.

Superintendent Gibson recommends approving item 13.1.f as written.

PRESENTED BY:
Dr. Torie Gibson, Superintendent
Michelle Cannon, ACUSD Legal Counsel – Lozano Smith
Dr. Rita Kerr, Amador County Public Health Officer
Norma Wallace, Executive Director – Tuolumne Joint Powers Authority (JPA)
Sean Snider, Assistant Superintendent – Education Services
Jared Critchfield, Assistant Superintendent – Business Services
David Vicari, Assistant Superintendent – Human Services
AMADOR COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Public Comment Contributors

1. Tim Ross
2. Pat Danczyk
3. Lisa Marie
4. Andrea Alderson
5. Melissa Coviello
6. Aaron Brusatori
7. Tiffany Garbarini
8. John Freesha
9. Congetta Davie
10. Susan Bordwell
11. Coleen Moore/Brazil
12. Julie Johnson
13. Nick Johnson
14. Artina Parkyn
15. Brett Mueller
16. Katherine Freesha
17. Jessi Bylund
18. Kia Dugger
19. Daniele Molin
20. Kristi Traxler
21. Brandie Machi
22. Martha Bracken
23. Andrea Dacier
24. Jon Gilliam
25. Eric Carlson
26. Andrea Rotar
27. Andrea Troublefield
28. Kathleen Mahan
29. John Mahan
30. Paul Beisser
31. Faye Hovey
32. Nicole Lowe
33. Ramona Longero
34. Dana Gaffey
35. Jana Whitlock
36. Joel Mottishaw
37. Matt Garbarini
38. Nikki Silveira-Bergen
39. Cami Rust
40. Rusty Folena
41. Beverly Folena
42. Scott Wagner
43. Nancy Moore
44. Kim Brandon
45. Judy Ferrell
46. Lacey Bartich
47. Phillip Martini
48. Andrea McGuckin
49. Trevor McGuckin
50. Pete Henry
51. Cristina Alcon
52. Regina Southard
53. Chrystie Woods
54. Tom McClintock

These comments were provided prior to 4 pm on
Tuesday, August 3rd
August 4, 2021
Good morning,

I appreciate the outreach effort in yesterday's email.

As a parent with three elementary aged children their safety and opportunity to learn are always at the top of my list of priorities.

I feel that every effort must be made to have our children in the classroom this year.

Last year was difficult for everyone - parents, teachers, and students. Our teachers made a tremendous effort to make the first part of the year as meaningful as possible but I firmly believe that a large part of the year was a waste for our children academically until they returned to the classroom through no fault of the teachers.

Updated CDC guidance of yesterday is for all children and staff in the schools to wear masks at all times. As much as this is uncomfortable for some (and a pain in the neck for all), I believe the masks should be work in compliance with the recommendations if a child wishes to receive in person instruction.

Those that do not want to wear masks can continue with remote learning.

Should updated CDC guidance be received removing the recommendation for children and staff to wear masks, then we can all stop wearing them at school.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Tim Ross
Fw: Special Board Meeting August 4, 2021 for COVID-19 Protocols in Amador County Public Schools

Dear Dr. Gibson,

Thank you for navigating this challenging and evolving environment.

We look forward to learning more about the Board's direction and trust that it will follow CDC guidelines.

Feel free to include this message, with my personal email address blacked out, in Board materials.

We are pleased to have you and your family in our community. Welcome!

Sincerely,
Paul

----- Forwarded Message -----
From: Sean Snider <ssnider@acusd.org>
To: "pdanczyk@yahoo.com" <pdanczyk@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2021, 05:04:38 PM PDT
Subject: Special Board Meeting August 4, 2021 for COVID-19 Protocols in Amador County Public Schools

July 27, 2021

Dear Amador County Parents/Guardians and Community Members,

Amador County Unified School District prides itself upon providing the best possible learning environment for every student. To make this possible we ask for input from all stakeholders on various topics. We know our community is currently concerned about COVID-19 protocols and plans, specifically around the topic of mask mandates in the classroom setting and the overall well-being of their child.

On Wednesday, August 4th at 5:30pm, the Amador County Unified School District Board of Trustees will hold a special board meeting to discuss our local COVID-19 Safety Plan for the 2021-2022 school year, and specifically the issue of mask requirements while inside school buildings. The meeting will be held at 810 Court St. in Jackson, as well as livestreamed by KVGÇ on their Facebook page. Together, the community-informed school board will decide how mask requirements will be enforced in the classroom setting with the help of the Public Health Director, Dr. Rita Kerr, input from the district's insurance carrier, legal counsel, and district leadership as we review all possible options.

Unfortunately, we may not have enough time for all stakeholders to speak in person on August 4th. The public comment portion of meetings are limited to 3 minutes per individual, with a 20-minute maximum per topic. For example, this means the issues related to mask requirements in the classroom setting will be limited to a total of 20 minutes of public comment. To accommodate all stakeholders and ensure all voices heard, we encourage you to submit your comments in writing to the board and myself no later than Monday, August 2nd at 6:00pm (email addresses are provided below). Unless requested otherwise, all public comments submitted will be compiled and distributed to each board member and published in the board packet on Tuesday, August 3rd.

We understand the historical event we find ourselves living through is challenging to navigate, and no one person's experience mimics another's. The best foreseeable avenue for student success defines itself through encouraging open
dialogue and a communal effort towards success. Our number one priority is always the safety of students and staff, while also keeping students at school Monday through Friday for full day instruction.

PUBLIC COMMENT EMAIL ADDRESSES - Please send to all listed below no later than Monday, August 2nd at 6:00pm to allow for review and board packet distribution:

President: Kandi Thompson (Area 1) - Kandi.t@acUSD.org
Clerk: Deborah Pulskamp (Area 2) - Deborah.pulskamp@acUSD.org
Trustee: James Marzano (Area 3) - James.f.marzano@acUSD.org
Trustee: Jim Whitaker (Area 4) - Jwhitaker@acUSD.org
Trustee: Julia Burns (Area 5) - Julia.burns@acUSD.org

Superintendent: Torie Gibson - Torie.gibson@acUSD.org

My office operates under an open-door policy, so please reach out directly any time with questions or concerns. I can be reached at 209-257-5353, and my email is torie.gibson@acUSD.org.

Sincerely,

Torie F. Gibson, Ed.D.

This message has been sent on behalf of Amador County Unified School District. If you do not wish to receive any future email from Amador County Unified School District, please click here. This message is intended exclusively for the individual or entity to which it is addressed. This communication may contain information that is proprietary, privileged or confidential or otherwise legally exempt from disclosure. If you are not the named addressee, you are not authorized to read, print, retain, copy or disseminate this message or any part of it. If you have received this message in error, please notify district administration and delete all copies of the message.
Masks in school
1 message

Lisa Marie  
To: Torie.gibson@acusd.org

Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 8:34 PM

I have a son that will be starting at Argonaut the year. 
I do not want the kids to be forced to wear a mask. I feel if they’d like to it’s ok, but I don’t think it should be mandatory. 
Kids need some normalcy. The last year and a half have taken a toll on all of them.

Sent from my iPhone
Re: Questions for Dr. Kerr

1 message

Torie Gibson <torie.gibson@acusd.org>  
To: The Alderson's  
Cc: kandl.t@acusd.org, deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, james.f.marzano@acusd.org, jwhitaker@acusd.org, julia.burns@acusd.org, Public Health <publichealth@amadorgov.org>  
Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 8:16 PM

Mrs. Alderson,

Current guidance states that in any situation where one student in a classroom tests positive, all students who are wearing masks indoors (the term in guidance is called "mask on mask") would not be required to quarantine. The student(s) in close contact would continue to attend full in person classes and would be tested twice a week for two weeks to demonstrate negative Covid tests. Each school site will be a testing center for any family wishing to use our services as a convenience.

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Sincerely,
Torie

Torie F. Gibson, Ed.D.
Amador County Unified School District, Superintendent
217 Rex Ave.
Jackson, CA 95642
(209) 257-5331

On Jul 27, 2021, at 8:08 PM, The Alderson's wrote:

I know you guys can't respond back to my email but I would like these questions presented to Dr. Kerr at the August 4th school board meeting. When, or if, a student tests positive for covid will that student's "close contacts" be required to quarantine? If the answer is yes then does that include students that can prove they have been vaccinated? In other words, will a vaccinated student be forced to quarantine?

Thank you,
Andrea Alderson

Virus-free. www.avg.com
Deaf/Hard of hearing kids and masks
1 message

Main  
To: torie.gibson@acusd.org

Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 8:25 PM

I just came across the guidelines for exceptions when it comes to wearing a mask at school. I have a 7th grader who is hard of hearing and a 9th grader who is Deaf. Thankfully both of my kids are fully vaccinated. But I want to make it very clear that under no circumstances do I want anyone to lower their mask while speaking to them. I need to figure out the best way to get guarantees that this won’t become an issue.

Can you give me a call at ___________

Even though I am also hard of hearing I do much better over the phone.
Thank you for your time,

Melissa Coviello

Sent from my iPhone
Good Morning,

I am writing in response to the email sent out on July 27, 2021 requesting comments on the Amador County Public Schools COVID-19 Protocols. It is unfortunate that the public comment will be limited to 20 minutes, this seems contrary to considering the thoughts of those impacted by the policies which are set by the BOARD. I respect concise comments and the 3-minute time limit and the BOARD should hear 3 minutes from each and every person that wishes to have their voice heard.

I am submitting my comments, for the record, in this email.

Our children are at very low risk for COVID-19. Studies show that if they are infected, they will be Ok. There is plenty of vaccine available for those adults who choose to get vaccinated.

I am opposed to having my children wear masks, especially when they are performing physical activity, like recess or PE.

I encourage the BOARD to push back and challenge legal counsel to find a way to facilitate the desires of the local community.

I encourage the BOARD to publish the emails that they receive so that the parents know the opinions of those who yielded their 3 minutes and submitted their opinions by email.

Sincerely,

Aaron Brusatori
Masks in school
1 message

Tiffany Garbarini
To: Kandi.t@acusd.org, Deborah.pulkamp@acusd.org, James.f.marzano@acusd.org, Jwhitaker@acusd.org, Julia.burns@acusd.org, Torie.gibson@acusd.org

Wed, Jul 28, 2021 at 1:42 PM

Good afternoon board and superintendent,
I am writing to you in regards to the concerns over masks in school. I am very grateful for my son and all students to get back in school full time this year. That obviously comes with risks, especially with the current Covid numbers growing in Amador county. While the vaccine has been readily available for months, the majority of those who are able to get the vaccine in Amador have chosen not to, adding fuel to this pandemic fire in our area.

Per the Amador County Health Department, there are 57 new Covid cases this week alone with 20 of them being children under the age of 18. It's a fallacy that children cannot get or pass Covid, as people have stated before. My son will be a senior at Amador High School this year. At a high school level, all students are old enough to get the vaccine if they choose, however with Amador's low vaccination numbers I would be surprised to see a high number of vaccines in high schoolers.

Your #1 job is to keep kids safe in our schools. Masks must continue to be required for all students and staff in order to keep them safe, at least for now. My family and I have all done our part to keep ourselves and others safe by getting the vaccine but many others have not. Please follow science and the CDCs direction to keep our children safe. I am sure Dr. Kerr will have the same direction.

Thank you,
Tiffany Garbarini

Sent from my iPhone
August 3rd school board meeting
1 message

John freeseaha
To: Kandl.t@acusd.org, Deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, James.f.marzaro@acusd.org, Jwhitaker@acusd.org,
Julia.burns@acusd.org, Torie.gibson@acusd.org

Wed, Jul 28, 2021 at 7:43 PM

Hello,

These are two subjects that I would like to address at the August 3rd meeting.

John Freeseaha

2 attachments

- School board meeting COVID-19 mask.docx 13K
- CRT school board meeting.docx 13K
Hello my name is John Freeseha. I am a father of 4 beautiful daughters. And I am done with having to look at them and instead of seeing their beautiful smiles, I see a mask. Why should children who have a greater chance of getting struck by lightening than getting seriously sick from COVID-19 have to wear a mask? And what passes for a mask is pathetic, as long as it covers your face it counts. I see people wearing masks that are just beads on a string, I can literally see their mouths through the beads. These masks do nothing but take our individualism away and make some people feel better. What about my feelings and I’m sure the feelings of most of the parents out there? We are sick and tired of having to look at our kids in masks. If I were scared of or worried about my children getting sick from COVID-19, I would keep them out of school completely. I would not rely or put any trust in a mask to keep my children healthy. The best mask out there is the N95 mask, it goes down to .3 microns and COVID-19 is .06 to .14 microns. So since we are at a school board meeting let do some math... which is bigger? And how often do you think most of these people that have reusable masks clean them? I am willing to bet not even once a week. I keep hearing follow the science, well science is following trends and looking at data. Well look at Florida, Utha, Texas... they stopped mask mandates months ago and they are still alive. If my children have to wear a mask at school, I will be pulling them out of Amador school system completely. Don’t get me wrong, if a child or teacher wants to wear a mask that’s their choice and I am fine with it. I served 12 years in the military for people to have freedom of choice, I just ask for me and my family to have the same. Thank you very much for your time.

God Bless America
I wish to have this email entered into the record for the 8/4 meeting. Thank you!

My name is Congetta Davie and I have a 2nd and 11th grader in our district. I’m writing you today to ask for mask choice on behalf of our children. I want to give you my perspective as a parent with a child with a speech IEP. For students like my Nico, being able to visualize the motor movements and placement of articulators is VITAL to proper production of sounds. For example, children like Nico that have difficulty producing F, V, and R require visual cues to properly produce those sounds (i.e. "bite your bottom lip," "smile big" "make a tongue bowl"). How can the teacher see if the child is making the correct placement for correct production of sounds if the child is wearing a mask? Even if the therapist that sees him 20 minutes per week has him work with his mask off, when he comes back into the classroom, he cannot work on, be corrected, or praised on these skills by the general ed teacher because he or she CANNOT see his face or HEAR him.

I also happen to be a teacher in the district. I am worried about the 5- and 6-year-olds in my classroom. I am worried about the time our students spent away from the classroom the last 18 months. Once we got back in person, my job was incredibly inhibited by mask wearing. Now I’m not here to give you a mini lesson on phonemic awareness and its importance to reading, BUT, it is all about sounds! Playing with, manipulating, isolating, deleting, correct mouth, lip, and tongue placement. This cannot be taught effectively if students are wearing masks. Dr. David Kilpatrick reminds us, “The most common source of reading difficulties is poor phonemic awareness.” We are making it difficult for most kids, and especially difficult for those struggling learners.

One of my mentors shared a great analogy regarding mask wearing and teaching reading. “Teaching reading while wearing masks is like teaching writing to a child with a broken arm.” Except its preventable, we’re the ones handicapping them on purpose! Our district has been assigned Covid19 relief funds that require us to document how we are “closing the gap” on our academics. We’re just creating a larger gap, if all students are masked in class.
Please, I don’t want to police masks in my classroom, I want to teach my heart out! I want myself and other parents to choose what’s best regarding their kiddo’s health in these crazy times when facts and information are ever changing and manipulated by multiple parties.

I know myself and hundreds of parents would be humbled and grateful if you were to act on behalf of the kids. Maybe that is in how you choose to “enforce” the state’s mandate. Maybe that is in the form of a letter to the state, asking for local control of this matter. Maybe that is in the form of a resolution declaring you think it is an unfair blanket policy.

Finally, I appreciate all you do on our behalf. You are serving in unprecedented times.

Thank you,

Congetta Davie
Parent/Kindergarten Teacher @ Ione Elementary

Sent from my iPhone
COVID 19 guidelines
1 message

Susan Bordwell
To: Torie Gibson <Torie.gibson@acusd.org>

Wed, Jul 28, 2021 at 4:35 PM

Board of Directors,

Thank you for this opportunity to address the COVID guidelines for the 2021/2022 school year. I have one daughter, who will be a senior at Amador High School this coming year. I have heard many strong opinions on the subject of the COVID 19 guidelines and the possibility of students wearing masks in the classroom for yet another year. I absolutely believe that the well being of the students and staff need to be a high priority for the district. My request is, however, when the District is creating the guidelines, it considers the effects masks have on the non-academic classes. My daughter participates in the theater program at Amador High School. And while she very much was grateful for the chance to perform in masks last year, it was very difficult to work on some of the skills (especially learning vocal techniques in musical theater or dancing in a hot indoor classroom) while wearing a mask. I believe indoor sports, music, theater, dance and some of the other activities and programs in our schools need guidelines that take into account both the health of the students and staff, as well as the learning and opportunities that are missed when masks are required 100% of the time. We need to find a balance between providing a healthy safe learning environment and an effective learning environment for activities and classes that are not the standard sit in a desk and listen style. Thank you for your time and your attention to this important matter.

Susan Bordwell
--
Susan
Hello, thank you for taking my comment.

My children need to return to school to start repairing the damage of being home and being isolated for over a year. It has harmed us all.

As a responsible parent and private citizen I have purchased masks to routinely wash with backups on hand, and have some disposables in case they are needed. I recently was told by a community member that masks are dangerous and harbor bacteria, and put children at risk of developing pneumonia. I wonder if they wash their masks regularly? Or if they have 5-10 masks so their child would be able to change it once daily at lunch, or if they coughed/sneezed or soiled it? If not, I guarantee our community would come together to purchase and sew more masks. I certainly would join that effort.

The purpose of masking is to protect the most vulnerable among us. It is not a rights issue or a freedom issue. I am very concerned that so many members of our community are arguing to disregard scientifically grounded recommendations based upon epidemiological data aggregated and disseminated by the CDC and public health officials. As of 7/27/21, the CDC released recommendations to mask inside regardless of vaccination status. On July 18, the American Association of Pediatrics urges in person instruction with masks on. It is not hard, nor is it a burden. If children have medical reasons why masks are not usable (like someone with a severe respiratory disease, or a formal anxiety or PTSD diagnosis), alternate safety measures can be used as they were in the 2020-2021 school year such as shields with neck drapes. As a logical parallel, I would just ask, Do you wash your hands during flu season? Your hands may get raw, but there are ways to comfort the skin. Do you slow down when you drive in front of a school or a retirement community, even if you are in a hurry and may be late for work? Caution is not synonymous with lack of freedom. It is a compassionate and loving act. Those who identify as Christian will know they are called to be merciful and kind and to protect the vulnerable. This is not a "progressive agenda".

I have a child who deserves to go to school just as much as any other child, and they need protection due to immune compromised status. Flu would not harm my child like covid-19 would, and not all diseases are equal. A child like mine is at high risk of developing the MultiSystem Inflammatory response, which can be a fatal complication from COVID (causing organ failure), even if the symptoms of COVID itself are very mild. People who have had COVID-19 or have been vaccinated can still carry it and pass it on to their loved ones. My children will continue wearing masks inside until the pandemic is over. It is not over yet.

Additionally, masking is not a new idea. My mother, a former long time teacher at Jackson Elementary School, lived in Japan in the 1980s and said that it was very common that if someone even a mild illness, they would wear a mask if they had to leave home, out of concern for others.

As long as physicians and scientists are recommending we do so, how can we stand in front of our community and say that as people without scientific backgrounds that have gotten their talking points from political news outlets or other biased sources, including our own personal opinions, know the right way to handle a global pandemic? It's ludicrous to me. Our county is experiencing substantial transmission based upon epidemiological data available to anyone who knows how to type into google.

Masking protects the most vulnerable among us whether they are elderly, chronically ill, or immune compromised. I urge you to forego political talking points to deny the importance of masking, when the outcome can harm or kill another community member. This is preventable. Why is it so upsetting to ask any one of us to wear a mask to protect others? Do you let strangers touch your newborn? If not, why? Will you teach your children to drive safely, to be gentle with their elderly grandparents to sometimes forego their own desires to give of themselves in order to serve others? If you
have auto insurance, do you still bother to follow the driving rules to protect others? The answer is yes, because the risk of damage is not worth it, even if you know you'll be covered at the end of the day.

We have a small community. We are not strangers. Many of us grew up together, and caring for our children and elderly is not a partisan or "choice" issue. Please, do not choose to disregard scientific data. Not everyone will die. But some of us might, and if it were your child, I'd put on a mask immediately. Your beautiful child deserves to survive this pandemic too.

Respectfully,

Colleen Brazil
guidance for face coverings
1 message

Colleen Moore To: Torie Gibson

Sat, Jul 31, 2021 at 8:13 PM
https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/guidance-for-face-coverings.aspx

Good evening Dr Gibson,

I am wondering if Dr Kerr will speak at the Board meeting on Aug 4th or if this guidance will be shared in the meeting. If possible, may we please include this guidance updated by CDPH on 7/28/21 specifically stating,

"Masking Requirements

Masks are required for all individuals in the following indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status:

- On public transit[1] (examples: airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, and ride-shares) and in transportation hubs (examples: airport, bus terminal, marina, train station, seaport or other port, subway station, or any other area that provides transportation)

- Indoors in K-12 schools[2], childcare[3]"

In addition, Calaveras County has already issued their own release (attached), but I was unable to find anything on Amador's Public Health page.

Thank you so much!

Colleen Brazil

2 attachments

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=4a5c3ed5db&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A17068590512755650612%7Cmsg-f%3A1706859051275...
Date: July 30, 2021

Contact: René Ramirez, M.D., Health Officer

Phone: (209) 754-6480

To: The schools and districts of Calaveras County,

This letter serves as a formal reminder to all Calaveras County school administrators, staff, districts, boards, and superintendents that California schools must comply with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) directives and executive orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The recent CDPH guidelines emphasize access to in-person learning. To achieve this, there are universal masking requirements that enable schools to eliminate physical distancing for indoor school settings. Recent CDPH and the National Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) evidence supports this strategy.

This CDPH guidance is consistent with the CDC K-12 School Guidelines, which state that when physical distancing is not possible it is important to layer additional mitigation strategies like masking. Masking is an evidence-based prevention strategy that controls both droplet and aerosol sources of infection. CDPH describes masks as one of the most effective and simplest safety mitigation methods available to prevent in-school transmission of COVID-19 to support full time in-person instruction.

According to the CDPH guidelines, Calaveras County schools have flexibility in how they enforce the masking requirements, but they must develop protocols to enforce them. CDPH encourages schools to offer alternative educational opportunities for students if they are excluded from campus because they will not wear a mask. They also remind public schools to be aware of the requirements in AB 130 to offer independent study programs for the 2021-22 school year.

With schools going back to full in-person learning CDPH has given the schools the safety guidelines to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within the schools and throughout our community.
Please note that failure to comply with California Department of Public Health directives, executive orders, and public health orders places students, staff, and community members at risk for COVID-19 infection. A violation of these orders can jeopardize current relations with the Tuolumne Joint Powers Authority, pose a threat to staff and school credentials, and potentially disrupt future funding.

Please see the CDPH K-12 School Guidance [here](#).

Respectfully,

[Signature]

René Ramirez, MD
Calaveras County Health Officer
I believe we as parents should have a choice on whether our children have to wear a mask in the classroom. I have three children in this school district, and I know from their own experiences that masks can hinder their education and emotional connection to others. As a parent I am able to decide what is safe and what is not safe for my own children. Please let each individual parent decide whether their children will wear a mask to school or not.

Thank you,
Nick and Julie Johnson

Sent from my iPhone
Hi There,
Since attending school in person last year my Kindergartener has come to the conclusion how much he hates school just because of wearing a mask. Every morning it was a fight, he couldn't focus, breath or hear instructions well. I don't want my Kindergartener to hate school, we want our children to be social, learn and thrive but masks have hindered that for him.
I believe parents should have a choice on whether their children have to wear masks in the classroom. Masks can alter experiences while at school and can hinder their education. As parents we are able to decide what is safe and what is not safe for our children. Please consider putting the power back in the parents hands and let us choose whether our children will wear a mask to school.

Thank you
Artina
ACUSD Covid Policy
1 message

Brett Mueller Thu, Jul 29, 2021 at 4:05 PM
To: Kandi.t@acusd.org, Deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, James.f.marzano@acusd.org, Jwhitaker@acusd.org, Julia.burns@acusd.org, Torie Gibson <torie.gibson@acusd.org>

I cannot make it to the special session on August 4th.

I am against having my kids wear masks at school in any form. There is zero science behind any kid wearing a mask indoors or outside. You will not find a single reliable scientific study that supports kids needing to wear masks in school. If a teacher or employee is afraid to be around kids not masking then they should either get the vaccine or find another job. It is so sad for our kids that Covid has turned into something political. It is our kids that suffer from these insane policies. Kids need to be back in school full time without masks. It is so sad that more kids died from suicide last year than from Covid. This has become a mental health crisis for our teenage kids in school. When is common sense going to return???

If the ACUSD decides that masks will be required, my kids will be home schooled until this insanity is over.

Thank you,

Brett Mueller
lone, CA
COVID-19 Protocols

1 message

Katherine Freeseha
To: "Torie.gibson@acusd.org" <Torie.gibson@acusd.org>

Fri, Jul 30, 2021 at 9:05 AM

My name is Katherine and I am a mother to four children who attend three different schools in the district. We are DONE with the mask mandates. There is zero scientific evidence that these masks do anything to protect children from COVID-19. What makes a child healthy is fresh air, a whole and healthy diet, clean water, exercise, sunshine and healthy emotional relationships, NOT masks. I believe it is child abuse to force children to cover their faces all day. Wearing a mask should be a CHOICE, NOT FORCED. I am so sick and tired of these ridiculous mask mandates. I will pull all four of my children COMPLETELY out of the district if you force my kids to wear a mask. Children get germs on their hands all day. All day they are having to touch their masks to readjust them, to eat or drink. All those germs on their hands are going directly onto their faces. You think this is healthy? The mask mandate is absolutely ridiculous and it has to STOP. If a student or staff choses to wear a mask, that is their choice, but it should not be forced. We parents are DONE!

Sent from Mail for Windows 10
Dear Amador County Public Schools Board of Trustees;

I am a parent whose child is currently set to be attending his first year at Jackson Junior High School, 6th grade. I am writing to voice my concerns about the ongoing Mask Mandates at our schools. I kept my son out of school last year, when the hybrid model became an option, due to Mask Mandates. I felt like mandatory mask wearing at school would make for a very cold environment. I knew it would be hard to continue Distance Learning, because I also work full time. But, I felt strongly that my son would be better off with family during these difficult times.

In my experience, and talking to parents that put their children back in the hybrid model, their kids still struggled, some even more so due to the focus on and requirements for masks. To date, my son is set to return to in-person learning August 11th. However, I am still very torn. The lack of interaction with Distance Learning hurt him significantly academically. He had always been a great student, but struggled severely since this began in 2020. He wants to go back to school, I think he craves that social interaction with teachers, staff and fellow students - he thrives there. I see now that interaction and environment played a huge part in him doing well academically. Both him and I feel that if there is a continued Mask Mandate, the problem with interaction will still be present. Continuing to make this a negative experience emotionally. I feel like teachers and staff have had to become mask police, rather than being able to focus on teaching our children. Being part of an educational community that helps our children thrive socially and emotionally is of utmost importance.

As humans, it is important to see the faces of the people we are interacting with, or it's just superficial. These masks can be desensitizing. The social destruction is disheartening. Our children, in their most formative years, are walking around in a world of unseen expressions... like robots. Everyone has experienced how seeing a smiling face can turn a bad day around... and our children are being deprived of that. This is all based on emotion, not on science or fact. It is an absolute tragedy that we are doing this to our children. Personally, I am more worried about what ends up on our children's masks after adjusting and touching them all day, and the effects it may be having on them while they're wearing them all day, especially in hot weather. There is a substantial amount of evidence that has shown children are medically, physically and psychologically harmed by mandatory masking.

Of utmost importance is that each family should have a choice as to what works best for their children and their learning. Every family should have the option to look at the facts, what concerns them most, and decide whether to wear a mask or not. If a family prefers to wear a mask, and feels better doing so, then by all means they should. I would never ask to take the right of choice away from someone. We should all be able to weigh our own concerns and choose what is best for our families.
I ask that you please consider giving the option to parents, as to whether or not to mask our children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jessi Bylund
Kandi Thompson <kandi.t@acusd.org>  
To: Torie Gibson <torie.gibson@acusd.org>  
Thu, Jul 29, 2021 at 8:02:15 PM PDT

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kia Dugger  
Date: July 29, 2021 at 8:02:15 PM PDT  
To: Jana Whitlock <jwhitlock@acusd.org>, deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, james.f.marzano@acusd.org, julia.bums@acusd.org, kandi.t@acusd.org

To whom this may concern.

My son will be starting kindergarten this August and my step son will be starting first grade. We are so excited for them to start and so are they! To finally have a little bit of "normal" back in their daily routines. I am worried and concerned about the forced mask rule the school is implementing. I strongly believe parents who want their children to wear masks should have that right and those who don’t should also have that right! Children have never been significant carriers of this virus. Children under 12 are ineligible to even receive the vaccine. To me if it is such a deadly virus the vaccine would be made safe for all age groups! In order for masks to properly work and not spread illnesses they would need to be suctioned to ones face, a cloth mask isn’t going to protect these kids. Children don’t keep the masks on properly either, 9 times out of 10 when my kids did wear a mask in the beginning of Covid it was a struggle to get them to keep it on. This will be a HUGE distraction. My kindergartner struggles already EXTREMELY bad with ADHD and concentration. Something like a mask to “play with” and fidget with will not benefit him in any way. Then teachers become “mask police” and it becomes a distraction to the entire class! Let our children experience normal again they deserve to be in school worry free and get the education they need. I strongly believe since this virus has a recovery rate of over 99% our children will be okay! Children are learning to read write, pronounce words etc they should be able to freely see their teachers face and lips when they are being taught. We want to set these children up for success not failure! There are already so many children who will be behind from this past year of distance learning. Please please let us as our children’s parents choose what we believe is best for them. After all we do have their best interest at heart!

Sincerely
Kia Dugger
Daniele Molin
To: Torie.gibson@acusd.org

Thu, Jul 29, 2021 at 5:17 PM

Please do your best to get those nasty masks off our kids. Working at the school and seeing the truth of masks is disgusting! They are on the ground, snotted in, sneezed in, coughed in, walked on, sat on, under the nasty lunch tables and all put right back on their faces! The bacteria and visible growing mold on the inside of these masks is appalling.
When littles have a seasonal allergy sneeze and apologize for it then say, "don't worry I sneezed in my mask!" Whoo!!
There's a whole lot of wrong going on. Then there's the oxygen issue. How are they supposed to learn when they can't breathe??. Please let parents make this decision for their children! I am VERY comfortable sending my children to school without a mask. In fact our family of 6 has never worn a mask outside of school. We take care of ourselves and do not need this decision made for us.

Sincerely Daniele
Unmask Our Children
1 message

Kristi Traxler
To: torie.gibson@acusd.org

Dear Dr Gibson-

My children are anxious this summer for school to start mainly due to the possibility of mandated mask wearing. They pulled through last year respectfully wearing their masks but dreaded every moment of it. Everything from relationship building, to social events, to in class teaching, etc, was all terribly impacted to virtually non existent due to the forced mask mandate. This is unacceptable. Both my kids made the choice to get vaccinated thinking this would help their cause to leave the mandated mask wearing behind them. We are a bit overwhelmed, as I am sure many are too, thinking things will again not be normal and that their school experience will be even more stressful than it should be.

I believe parents should have a choice on whether their children have to wear masks in the classroom. From my children's personal experiences last year, masks have absolutely altered their experiences while at school in a negative way and have hindered their education. As parents we are able to decide what is safe and what is not safe for our children. Please consider putting the power back in the parents hands and let us choose whether our children will wear a mask to school.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully, from a very concerned parent,
Kristi Traxler
Hi Deborah-

I'm just putting my two cents in on this topic. I believe it should be up to parents to decide if they want their child to wear a mask to school or not. Especially since I have a child that is in first grade, learning to read, the mask is such a hindrance! We need to keep mask choice in the hands of parents.

Thank you
Brandie Machi
Our opinion is that the masks should be optional for kids. Kids are not getting terrible covid symptoms and seem to do fine with the virus if they do get it. We understand people have families with conditions but at this point they can either get vaccines or have decided not to, the ball is in their court. Kids need to be able to feel like they are comfortable and can breathe freely. If people want to be extra safe they should have options to do home school or distance learning. Maybe if there are enough kids who need to wear masks should have their own classroom or they can wear masks. Most people seem to want kids be able not to have to wear a mask, from my observations as a hair stylist. We of course would do what majority decides and will comply with the regulations in place by the time kids start school.
.ATTENTION.
1 message

Andrea Dacier To: "James.f.marzano@acusd.org" <James.f.marzano@acusd.org>, "Jwhitaker@acusd.org" <Jwhitaker@acusd.org>, "Julia.burns@acusd.org" <Julia.burns@acusd.org>, "deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org" <deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org>, "kandl.tj@acusd.org" <kandl.tj@acusd.org>
Cc: "Torie.gibson@acusd.org" <Torie.gibson@acusd.org>
Thu, Jul 29, 2021 at 5:09 PM

To whom it may concern,

We are approaching the start of the school year. My Son will be attending kindergarten at lone Elementary. I can't help but express my fear and worry.

When will children have the option to not wear masks? I've done extensive research around masks, and there is evidence that they do far more harm than good.

Wearing a mask for long periods (and seeing others wear masks) can damage people physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Children are even more vulnerable to this damage vs an adult. I am very concerned about the effects these mandates have on our children's mental health. Our suicide rate has skyrocketed.

Secondly, as soon as a mask becomes saturated with the moisture in your breath, they stop doing their job and pass on the droplets. For, in this case, a mask is essentially useless. We are not changing masks out frequently and most are homemade or made out of "breathable" fabric and used throughout the week.

I will quote from an article (https://www.aier.org/article/masking-children-tragic-unscientific-and-damaging/)

"A child unexposed to nature has little defense against a minor illness, which can become overwhelming due to the lack of a primed 'tuned-up and 'taxed' immune system. A robust immune system shortens an illness as a consequence of the presence of preprogrammed anamnestic immunity. Preventing children from such interactions with nature and germs can and does lead to overwhelming infections and serious consequences to the health and life of a child. We might be setting up our children for future disaster when they emerge from societal restrictions fully and with no masks, to then be at the mercy of normally benign opportunistic infections with a now weakened immune system."

Entering the world of education there is of great importance to be able to share your smile, breathe freely, play, and learn with your peers without fear. These are crucial developmental skills.

Young children are learning to read, write, correct pronunciation, sounding out words, placing them together they are dependent on the teacher's lips and expressions.

"This is not an issue of the 'science' as kids do not spread the virus readily to kids, to adults, to teachers, or the home. They do not get severely ill or die from this. Moreover, teachers are at very low risk of severe illness or death and the school setting remains one of the safest, lowest-risk environments." -from that article listed above.

I understand some feel safer with a mask, which should be perfectly acceptable if they wish to do so. Seven hours a day, 5 days a week is too much for children who are still developing.

Our case numbers are down. The vaccine is available for those who wish to go that route, and the recovery rate remains over 99%.

Amador County residents Ages 0-17 constituted only 9.4% of total COVID cases and there have been no confirmed deaths of children. See attached link: (https://www.amadorgov.org/services/covid-19)

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=4e5c3ed6db&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1706666222847399874%7Cmsg-f%3A1706666222847... 1/2
I advocate for education to empowering our children to take care of their bodies. Such as getting sunshine, plenty of sleep, eating fruits and vegetables, connecting with your peers, connecting with nature, limiting screen time, movement and exercise. These neglects were affecting or health crisis long before covid.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I am deeply concerned about the future of our children if we keep neglecting true health for a false sense of safety.

I believe it's time to take a step back and take a look at the bigger picture of our children's health, keeping in mind our present reactively will shape their future.

May we proceed with wisdom and love over fear.

Respectfully,
Andrea Dacier
Covid-19 Protocols
1 message

Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 10:53 AM

Jon Gilliam
To: Deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, James.f.marzano@acusd.org, Jim Whitaker <Jwhitaker@acusd.org>, Julia.burns@acusd.org, Torie.gibson@acusd.org, Kandi.t@acusd.org

I am writing this letter to the Amador County Unified School District Board of Trustees so they can hear from a teacher in one of their schools concerning the mask policies. If our goal is to provide the best possible learning environment for every student then we will most surely unmask our children.

The risks of masking students far outweigh the benefits. Masking our children is negatively impacting their learning, speech, emotional and social development, and physical health. Last year I witnessed these negative outcomes as a teacher at Jackson Junior High School. Students and teachers had difficulty communicating with masks. Students couldn’t adequately hear teachers or other students with the barrier of a mask. The barrier of masks also hinders our ability to see the faces of our students. In many cases masks prohibit teachers from visually seeing when students are struggling emotionally or socially. As a Physical Education teacher our students had difficulty simply breathing in masks during physical activities. Lastly, the effects of asking your teachers and administrators to be the mask police at school are devastating. The simple truth is a large percentage of our students wear the masks below their nose or mouth. To combat this, teachers and administrators who would normally be using their non-instructional time and break duty to build kids up and form much needed positive relationships with the student body are now forced to nag kids about pulling up their masks.

If we follow the science, the mortality rate for kids who don’t have comorbidities or diseases is 0%. If we follow the bureaucratic guidelines of the CDC then soon we will be masking our kids indefinitely every flu season and the masking will never end. As elected school board members I hope you have the courage to provide the best possible learning environment for every student and unmask our children at school.

Sincerely,

Jon Gilliam
JJHS PE Teacher
Parent Input, Public Comment for 8/4 Meeting

1 message

Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 10:40 AM

Greetings Amador County Board Members,

As a parent and special educator I must strongly recommend that the school district supports evidence based practices that ensure safety (i.e. masking during the pandemic), rather than falling victim to the rhetoric of a very vocal minority who use false information to further a dangerous agenda.

All students have the right to access in-person learning in an inclusive environment; which means students who are medically fragile, have a cognitive disability, and those who are typically developing deserve to share the same high quality learning experience within a safe and caring environment. In today’s uncertain times, safety includes utilizing harmless interventions such as wearing a mask which serves to impede the transmission of COVID-19. Simple interventions such as masking in schools serve to protect the greater community in Amador, as well as our children, teachers, and family members.

Please protect our children and community by following the logical and harmless interventions set forth by persons/institutions who base their claims on evidence and expertise, rather than those who use false doctrine to pursue illogical avenues which will undoubtedly lead to liable outcomes.

Cheers,
Eric Carlson
Dear Superintendent Gibson and Board Members,

I am writing as a parent of two high school students and as a State Preschool staff member.

Athletes and P.E. students should NOT be required to wear masks whether they are inside or outside. Masks restrict breathing and is not healthy while exercising. My daughter was so excited to play volleyball this year and spent the better part of the summer practicing with the team unmasked. We found out on Friday, July 30 that players must wear a mask during practice starting Monday, August 2 (start of season). When my daughter asked the coach if they would have to wear a mask during the games, she did not know and was waiting to hear. I assume if masks need to be worn at practice, they must be worn at games. If the district is mandating masks at practice but not at the games, what is the point in wearing masks at practice? I wish this information was given prior to summer practices. I have been unable to find anything in writing updated for the 2021-22 school year on the high school or CIF websites regarding mask wearing and athletics. In addition to masks restricting breathing, my daughter wears glasses. When she wears a mask, they can get fogged up sitting still at a desk. Her glasses would more than likely get fogged up moving her head and body around during a game, impeding her vision. My daughter made the tough decision not to play this year due to the mask requirement. Students should not have to give up playing a sport they love or be required to take P.E. because they don’t want to restrict their breathing by wearing a mask while playing.

Working at a State Preschool site, in person, 5 days a week last year I found:

We were in the classroom full time with students from the first day of school while everyone else was distance learning. Students were not required to wear masks prior to November 2020 because they were under 8 years old. We were vigilant with morning health checks, handwashing, distancing, and disinfecting our classroom and we did not have one COVID case. It was then mandated that everyone over age 2 must wear a mask. Masks were not worn properly, masks were being chewed on while being worn, and reusable masks were worn days on end without being washed (they were disgusting). Students would touch their mouth and nose more often when wearing a mask. They would lower their mask while coughing and sneezing defeating the purpose of the mask. Students would constantly take their masks off because it was uncomfortable. Students would drop their masks on the floor (sometimes stepped on) and put them back on. I saw all these mask issues not only in preschool, but also on the elementary campus. We ended the year with no COVID cases (preschool). I feel we were better off with students not wearing masks, just for the hygiene aspect. I feel perfectly safe with students not wearing masks. Preschool students should not be wearing masks.

Children in preschool and elementary school should not be required to wear masks indoors and outdoors. These are formative years; they need to be able to hear the correct way to make letter sounds and repeat it especially if the student is receiving speech services. Masks muffle words and sounds. A lot of student psychological development takes place with visual facial cues. Young children are not super-spreaders of the disease and should not be required to wear masks. It is a hindrance to their learning. It is distracting. It is hot in the warmer months. It obstructs their breathing.

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=4e6c3ed6db&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1706995542092544962%7Cmsg-f%3A1706995542092544962... 1/2
Masks can be avoided by being performing comprehensive health checks. Most parents and teachers can tell when a child is feeling ill. We have COVID procedures in place that work and protect students and staff. Encouraging handwashing and having adequate handwashing stations is effective too. Staff and students can be safe without wearing masks indoors and outdoors.

PLEASE, NO MASKS FOR ATHLETES AND P.E. STUDENTS INDOORS AND OUTDOORS.

PLEASE, NO MASKS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS INDOORS AND OUTDOORS.

Sincerely,
Andrea Rotar

Sent from Mail for Windows 10
Greetings,

Please see the attached public comment for publication along with the board agenda. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of this matter. Stay safe and stay well!

Best regards,

Andrea Troublefield, Esq. JD/MBA, CCEP
August 2, 2021

Dear School Board Trustees,

I am a mother of three children, two of whom attend Pioneer Elementary. I am also a licensed attorney, which has worked in a local Health and Human Services Agency and now works for a local Office of County Counsel, as an attorney advising local government. I say all of that to say this, I have been intimately involved in the local government response, including analysis of the unique legal issues that the COVID-19 Pandemic has brought, both in the context of government labor and employment relations, masking requirements and in the implementation of certain COVID-19 government programs. I have seen time and again people ignorant of the proven science claim this pandemic and virus aren’t real, that the vaccines approved by the Food and Drug Administration for Emergency Authorization Use are somehow evil and have microchips, and claims that “putting on the mask” is what is making people sick, etc. I believe the political polarization of the issues of this pandemic, vaccines and masking is needlessly dangerous. I don’t think I am the first to say, although I’ll freely admit, this whole thing completely sucks, shout it from the rooftops, this sucks! I am not going to sugar coat it or pretend. I realize my position may even be an unpopular one, but we are where we are (no amount of pretending or wishing will change the fact that this is real and is the fight of our lives). We must get through this in a way that protects each other and aligns with the proven science.

As we learn more about the SARS-cov-2 virus, the science is updated, case in point the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is now recommending that fully vaccinated individuals start masking again, in light of the Delta variant, being as transmissible as the Chicken Pox Virus, more deadly than the initial iteration of this virus, causes breakthrough infections and is circulating widely within the United States and California.

Short of dis-enrolling kids from the school, many parents have no option to change the fact that our kids attend school with children, whose parents may unfortunately believe the disinformation and misinformation raging in this pandemic like wildfire and also may not be taking proper protections. One way that you can protect our kids and allow them some semblance of normalcy through this, is to require masks for all on school campuses, regardless of vaccination status. I and my children would like to continue in person instruction and not go backwards in this pandemic (although I am aware, in light of the Delta variant, we may end up going backwards, an anxiety provoking thought). Trust me when I say, I very much dislike having to search for a mask for my kids, as they head out the door for school, and we all dislike wearing them (me included), however masks are necessary. Bottom line, specifically regarding elementary schools, I am simply requesting for the Trustees of the School Board to please follow the science and the recommendation of the CDC and vote to require masking for all persons on school campuses, regardless of vaccine status.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my position.

Best Regards,

Andrea L. Troublefield, ESQ., MBA, CCEP
I strongly request that wearing masks for all students should be Optional (as a Student Preference), not Mandatory. My request is based on the following:

1) In my opinion, students are not at a high-health-risk even if they contract Covid-19 (including the Delta variant). I believe their risk is similar to other existing communicable diseases common to children. If a child has a pre-existing health issue they may wear a mask at their choice;

2) There is no scientific, peer-reviewed, proof that masks are effective in preventing Covid-19;

3) Wearing masks actually poses respiratory and sanitary health hazards to children that could exceed the risk of Covid-19 for some Students;

4) Wearing masks can create serious mental health issues by promoting fear, preventing proper socialization and instilling long-term feelings of anxiety and remoteness.

5) Most Students have had extensive socialization with others, without masks, since the last school year. I am not aware of a case of Covid-19 in Amador children that resulted in serious illness or health issues.

6) Concerned others may wear masks and social distance from those Unmasked.

Respectfully,

Kathleen Mahan
Mother of Ione Jr. High Student

Plymouth Resident
Mask Policy for 2021-2022 School Year

1 message

Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 11:03 AM

John Mahan • torie.gibson@acusd.org

To: "Kandi.T@acusd.org" <Kandi.T@acusd.org>, "Deborah.Pulskamp@acusd.org" <Deborah.Pulskamp@acusd.org>, "James.F.Marzano@acusd.org" <James.F.Marzano@acusd.org>, "JWhitaker@acusd.org" <JWhitaker@acusd.org>, "Julia.Burns@acusd.org" <Julia.Burns@acusd.org>, "Torie.Gibson@acusd.org" <Torie.Gibson@acusd.org>

SENT: August 2, 2021 (Emailed before 6pm)

Subject: Mask Policy for 2021-2022 School Year

TO: Amador County Unified School District

President: Kandi Thompson (Area 1)
Clerk: Deborah Pulskamp (Area 2)
James Marzano (Area 3)
Jim Whitaker (Area 4)
Trustee: Julia Burns (Area 5)
Superintendent: Torie Gibson

ATTN: August 4, 2021 Board Meeting

We strongly request wearing masks for all students should be Optional (as a Student Preference), not Mandatory. Our request is based on the following:

1) In our opinion, students are not at a high-health-risk even if they contract Covid-19 (including the Delta variant). We believe their risk is similar to other existing communicable diseases common to children. If a child has a pre-existing health issue they may wear a mask at their choice;
2) There is no scientific, peer-reviewed, proof that masks are effective in preventing Covid-19;
3) Wearing masks actually poses respiratory and sanitary health hazards to children that could exceed the risk of Covid-19 for some Students;
4) Wearing masks creates serious mental health issues by promoting fear, preventing proper socialization and instilling long-term feelings of anxiety, inadequacy, remoteness and incapacity.
5) Most Students had extensive socialization with others, without masks, since the last school year and we are not aware of a single case of Covid-19 in Amador children that caused serious health issues.
6) Concerned others may wear masks and social distance from those Unmasked.

Regards,
John & Marlene Mahan
Plymouth, CA
1. Regarding mask wearing inside will be resolved based on CDC, California State Health Board, and Amador County health Officer recommendations. Along with the reality of the increasing infection rate of the Delta variant and the low vaccination rate in Amador County which I believe stands at less than 40% fully vaccinated.

2. I would like to know if all school personnel and children who are eligible are fully vaccinated and if not why? If the school board is allowing unvaccinated people to interact with our children will they be tested each day and required to be masked at all times?

3. Considering the low vaccination rate in Amador County I would purpose that children of unvaccinated parents or guardians be required to attend the distant learning classes while those whose parents are fully vaccinated should be able to attend a fully vaccinated and masked up school with the exception of children under twelve who the vaccine has not yet approved for but plan to get once it becomes available.

Thank you for making every effort to keep our children safe without political considerations.

Paul Beisser
Dear Amador County School Board Member:

Fall 2021. A time for us to apply what we learned from last year or duplicate the actions of the past and expect a different result. The latter of course is an example of insanity. We have learned that a virus is an infective agent that consists of a RNA/DNA molecule in a protein coat, too small to be seen by light microscopy, and cannot grow or reproduce apart from a living cell within a host. Viruses do not have any political, religious, or sexual preferences.

A virus invades living cells and uses their chemical machinery to keep itself alive and to replicate itself. It may reproduce with fidelity or with errors (mutations); this ability to mutate is responsible for the ability of some viruses to change slightly in each infected person, making treatment difficult. (https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/hp.asp). The principal mode by which people are infected with SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) is through exposure to respiratory fluids carrying infectious virus.

Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant, CDC has updated the guidance for fully vaccinated people. CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. If you are fully vaccinated, to maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission, (Please note the July 27, 2021, press release from the Amador County Public Health Officer below). Wearing a mask is most important if you have a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you are at increased risk for severe disease, or if someone in your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated. If this applies to you or your household, you might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission in your area.

If you haven’t been vaccinated yet, find a vaccine.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Amador COVID-19 Cases Continue to Increase Amador County, CA-July 27, 2021

Diana Evensen, MSPH Amador County Public Health Public Information Officer

Amador County Public Health reports 57 more cases of COVID-19 since last Tuesday’s update, bringing the total laboratory confirmed case count to 1,958. The current cases include 26 males and 31 females, 20 children under the age of 18 years, 25 aged 18-49, 10 aged 50-64, 2 age 65 and above; 18 residing in Ione, 6 in Jackson, 4 living in Plymouth/surrounding areas, 6 in Pine Grove, 4 residing in Pioneer, and 19 in Sutter Creek/Amador City. 725 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in 2021 to date. Two Amador residents are currently hospitalized with COVID-19.

https://www.amadorgov.org/home/showpublisheddocument/39995/637629948835400000

The local, national, and world data available to us suggests that vaccinations and mask wearing for all staff, students, teachers and visitors to all K-12 educational sites should be mandatory. This would be the intelligent way forward. Unfortunately our species too often substitutes intelligence for accommodating. So how do we provide a quality educational experience for the community while accommodating both sides of the argument?

We learned from last year that mask enforcement was a problem. Too many students wore their masks incorrectly. Too many staff members did not enforce the proper guidelines. The most important responsibility we have to the community is that the health of every child and adult is protected without compromise.

- All unvaccinated or vaccinated teachers or staff who are unwilling to enforce a proper mask wearing policy should continue with distance learning.
- All unvaccinated or vaccinated students who refuse to wear a mask properly should continue with distance learning.

Miles Krier
Independence High School
Please see the attachment for my comments on un-masking ACUSD this year. Thank you.

Regards,

Faye Hovey
Dear Amador County School Board Members and Superintendent,

Hello, my name is Faye Hovey and I am a parent of three children in the school district, was a teacher up until last year, and the wife of another ACUSD teacher.

Similar to the rest of our country and world, my family’s lifestyle and routine was affected by the pandemic. We did distance learning while working from home, sanitized our groceries and changed our clothes when we got back from the store. We stopped socializing with other families and friends in person. My eldest son even celebrated one of his birthdays with a Zoom party. To many, and even now ourselves, all of this was extreme. But, at first we didn’t know much about Covid-19 and just saw the global death rate rising. Since we have a child with a compromised immune system, who is high risk, we deemed all of this necessary.

After several months of taking extreme measures we started to see a trend in Covid cases, mostly that it affected the elderly and people with underlying health issues. We also noticed our children at home suffering from lack of socialization. Though our son was at high risk, we decided that our children’s social/emotional health is of far greater importance than the small risk of dying from Covid-19.

You see, the health and well-being of children is a top priority for me as a mom, teacher, friend, and community member. In my experience, children need individualized attention and emotional support to be at their best for learning. It is well known in the teaching community that children will learn once their needs are met. But, if their peers, teachers, and staff are wearing masks, how can they see emotions and reflect them back? How can they build empathy without seeing emotions through expressions? Psychologists would tell you that this will negatively impact their future and children will become adults without having developed the necessary pathways in their brains to regulate emotions and to obtain good mental health.

Over time our opinion shifted even more, to the point that we stopped wearing our masks wherever it was not enforced, and we allowed our children to socialize with any friends mask free. Though I was no longer worried about Covid, I still did my part as a teacher to enforce the mask rules at school. In fact, I was very strict with my class and reminded them often to wear their masks properly. Though I did my best to enforce the rules politely, the students’ attitudes towards me and school were negatively affected by it. Imagine trying to work through a difficult problem and being interrupted multiple times to pull up your mask. How annoying, frustrating, and distracting that must have been for my students!!!! But I was a rule enforcer, and so that is what I did. Looking back, I definitely would say that my students’ academic progress was negatively impacted by me enforcing the mask mandate. It distracted them, was uncomfortable to wear, and limited their oxygen enough that some of my students got headaches from wearing their masks too long.

As a school district, staff and teachers, when we have rules, they should be enforced, otherwise what are they there for? If we follow the mask mandate, will all teachers enforce it? Will it
distract from learning and impact academic performance? Will it negatively affect students’ attitude toward school, and therefore performance? Yes, I believe it will. It is my opinion that masks are more dangerous for children than they are helpful in preventing Covid-19.

I know that there are potential financial risks for our school district if we do not comply with the mask mandate, but I implore you to look at all the options. Is there a way to find insurance a different way? If we lose five million dollars, or however much, what would it impact? Could we forgo updates or supplies in order to put our children’s health first?? I am not saying to cut anyone’s pay. That should never be a consideration. But, as a past teacher, I would forgo any training or supplies if it meant that my students could breathe freely, see and share emotions, and have the best possible experience for their development, mask free.

Please consider allowing families to choose whether to mask up or not. As a family with a high risk child, we are choosing not to mask because we have deemed social/emotional/mental health greater than the small risk of our son dying from Covid. Some families will take the risks and others won’t, but it should be their choice. Each family should be able to determine for themselves whether to wear masks or not. This is a health choice that families should be free to make, and not determined by a school district or the government.

Here are several resources I recently came across that I think could be helpful to your decision process:

1. Will Wearing Masks Affect Children’s Emotional Development?

2. Psychosocial, biological, and immunological risks for children and pupils make long-term wearing of mouth masks difficult to maintain

3. Small California school districts will refuse to follow mask mandate

Best of luck to you in forming this difficult decision.

Sincerely,

Faye Hovey
Parent & Previous ACUSD Teacher
Covid-19 Protocols for Amador County
1 message

Nicole Lowe <nicole.lowe@acusd.org> Sun, Aug 1, 2021 at 10:24 PM
To: Kandi.t@acusd.org, Deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, James.f.marzano@acusd.org, Jwhitaker@acusd.org, Julia.burns@acusd.org, Torie.gibson@acusd.org

To all it may concern,

I am writing in as a mother of a 3rd grade child going to Sutter Creek Elementary. The last year and a half my child has been a distance learner. Although difficult in the beginning and definitely some chaos here and there, my child thrived with me as her side and an absolutely amazing teacher(Ms.Isotalo). I have zero regrets or resentments regarding distance learning. I truly believe it is an option we should always have and it should not go away, beyond covid. With that said I am excited to see my child go back to the classroom and my child is so very beyond excited to go back. I was hesitant to send her back for this next School year but the covid numbers started dropping and my household(besides my child) were vaccinated. I decided to send her to summer school to acclimate her back into the classroom setting and it worked.

We felt prepared for this new school year. I then hear it is in debates regarding the children wearing masks and social distancing. I was upset and shocked why this would even be a debate. The covid numbers along with variants are on the rise, why would we stop keeping our children safe? I very badly want to send my child back into the classroom but not if masks are not mandatory. My child nor any of the children in my family have ever complained about wearing a mask and they all understand it's to keep themselves and others safe. It's pretty basic.

Please, please continue with the mask mandate at School. Let us see where we are down the line to debate this. I want my child to have the chance to go back into the classroom after an entire year and a half of distance learning. They deserve to go back as well as deserve to be safe. If there is not a mask mandate it will not be safe for our children and their families. Allow the vaccinated teachers to be unmasked if they are comfortable with it but please continue with the unvaccinated and children to be masked.

I truly appreciate you listening to my opinion on this very important safety issue. I could sit and argue others opinions but I do not see that as productive. I just want you to hear my own opinion but make a decision based on the safety of our children and entire community.

Thank you very much for your time,
Nicole Lowe
For public input 8/4/21 regarding masking in schools acoe/acusd upcoming school year.

Anthony is a profoundly disabled, immune compromised young man who accesses minimal services through acoe on a part time basis. But those tiny amounts of time had been greatly important and well enjoyed prior to February 2020. I say February instead of March because he was out sick, very very sick from the end of February until school closed for vacation and we never returned. Sick from a virus brought home from school and well documented as going around and no one caring it was spreading. Progression in some of his other issues was the end result but we lived. Everyone knows the term long hauler now. Welcome to the club.

His behaviors became more complicated having his sister home on distance learning. Never again got to see the pe teacher he had since he was three or say goodbye. No more cbf trips to socialize. Behaviors increased greatly when masking became a staple. He went from little to no self harm to biting his fingers and his arms. Instead of him and I going out to do community based learning like purchasing items and using a debit card I now needed another person with me to calm him from jumping and yelling in aisles when someone with a mask came near so I could complete the shopping.

Masks or shields on anyone near my child is NOT the least restrictive environment. Anthony is not only non verbal but also understands very little and processes very slowly. He needs to see faces. Not stare at the reflection on your face shield wondering why your have it on waiting for the next masked person to creep up on him like Groundhog Day landed on Halloween. How about a shield right he could get use to that and maybe use it? Sure. I've only been working unsuccessfully on gloves and hat for 16 years. How many kids are regressing and no one cares because of covid new norms?

I recently found out anyone who seems to have adverse effects after casual skin contact with anyone who has had a covid vaccine should be reporting. That is unvaccinated reacting to vaccinated. Does the school district and office of education have a tracking system for individuals who suffer side effects via employees who were mostly pressured and scared into receiving a vaccine many parents may not want their children exposed to?

"An occupational exposure occurs when a person receives unplanned direct contact with a vaccine test subject, which may or may not lead to the occurrence of an adverse event. These people may include health care providers, family members, and other people who are around the trial participant.
When such exposures happen, the investigator must report them to Pfizer safely within 24 hours of becoming aware of when they happened, regardless of whether or not there is an associated secondary adverse event. This must be reported using the vaccine secondary adverse event report form. **SINCE THE INFORMATION DOES NOT PERTAIN TO A PARTICIPANT INVOLVED IN THE STUDY, THE INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT SEPARATE FROM THE STUDY.**" See the Pfizer link attached for full information.

Everyone who has the vaccines before the dates listed below ARE part of the initial studies. I have not consented to have my severely immune compromised child exposed to experimental treatments via school staff that have been convinced they are doing it for the children’s benefit.

**Moderna trial ends November 2022**

**Pfizer trial ends 2024**

Anthony was experiencing some intense symptoms after visiting Argonaut for adaptive physical education this past year. For a short while I was looking to the special covid cleaning solution on gym equipment. He is reactive to many many things. But after tracking his symptoms on a calendar (including pictures), I realized his being unwell was also occurring when we did outside activities on the track. Then I further tracked him being unwell to direct skin to skin casual contact with a vaccinated school employee. Finally, individual personal reports started coming in showing me it wasn’t just Anthony but other people reacting as well as, I was finally able to access the attached Pfizer document that clearly states “casual contact transmission though skin sweat or breath”. The document is fairly unclear stating a possible 30 days of transmission/shedding. Seeing as Anthony was reacting to the school close contact week 13 after that staff was vaccinated, I’d say the research on this won’t be fully known until the trial ends. Hopefully sooner. But I will not harm my child while we wait for this experiment to end years from now.

So now please tell us if the office of education and the district will have unvaccinated staff or classrooms for immune compromised children like my son where any vaccinated person would not be allowed within six feet? This would include teachers, aides and service providers. And I am completely against masks but if you must, I’d suggest requiring shields and gloves for ONLY vaccinated employees, volunteers and students.

Thank you for your time receiving my input and considering the statements and attachments.

Sincerely,
Ramona Longero

**Shedding**

**Shedding pages 67-70**
Social Distancing and Mask Mandates

1 message

Dana Gallozzi <d...>
To: Kandi.t@acusd.org, Deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, James.f.marzano@acusd.org, Jwhitaker@acusd.org, Julia.burns@acusd.org, Torie.gibson@acusd.org

Sun, Aug 1, 2021 at 8:26 PM

To whom it may concern;
My daughter will be starting kindergarten at Plymouth Elementary this year. My family and I would prefer if mask mandates and physical distancing are still required to keep our children and our community safe. We all wish covid was behind us but unfortunately this is not so. If we as a community can all continue to follow the cdc guidelines and requirements and hopefully get vaccinated things can return to normal. My childrens' safety is my top priority and I hope it is that of this school district as well.

Thank you,
Dana Kellogg
21/22 school year
1 message

Jana Whitlock <jwhitaker@acusd.org> Sun, Aug 1, 2021 at 5:36 PM
To: Deborah Pulsamp <deborah.pulsamp@acusd.org>, James Marzano <james.f.marzano@acusd.org>, Jim Whitaker <jwhitaker@acusd.org>, Julia Burns <julia.burns@acusd.org>, Kandi Thompson <kandi.thompson@acusd.org>, Torie Gibson <torie.gibson@acusd.org>

Of course I would like there to be no masks, but it's a small price to be able to return full time with no distance restrictions if that's what needs to be done.

Being the Administrative Assistant at Jackson Elementary, what I have been thinking about is how we will be handling volunteers. I know the added requirements were put in place at the end of last year, but my concern of having volunteers that are not vaccinated, wanting to help in the classroom weekly is going to be an added strain on the office to monitor. I would really like unvaccinated people to only be able to participate in field trips, parties, etc. rather than monitor their testing continuously. I feel it's a lot to ask of office personnel.

The other thing I've been thinking about is how we will be handling students not feeling well. Last year, all they had to say was that they didn't feel well and we had to send them home. It didn't take long for them to realize that's all they had to do to get to go home. I'm really hoping we do not have to be so fast to send kids home. Kids get sick at the start of school every year. It's natural. It's not necessarily covid. It's strengthening the immune system. I would like us to be about to handle this how we did before covid.

Thank you for your time,

Jana Whitlock
--
Jana Whitlock
Administrative Assistant
Jackson Elementary
Jackson, CA 95642
Fwd: Upcoming ACUSD/ACOE meeting

1 message

Kandi Thompson
To: Torie Gibson <torie.gibson@acusd.org>

Sun, Aug 1, 2021 at 12:52 PM

I didn't get this msg. He sent it to my ACUSD.org email but I never got it so I worried that you didn't. He sent it to my other email so I could revive it so I wanted to forward in case you didn't get it. 🙏

Thanks
Kandi

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Joel T. Mottishaw" <>
Date: July 31, 2021 at 3:38:12 PM PDT
To: 
Subject: Fwd: Upcoming ACUSD/ACOE meeting

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Joel T. Mottishaw" <>
Date: July 30, 2021 at 4:08:16 PM PDT
To: kandi.tl@acusd.org, torie.gibson@acusd.org
Subject: Upcoming ACUSD/ACOE meeting

Good afternoon,

First, welcome to Amador County and ACUSD Ms. Gibson! I have read your bio and others have certainly spoken highly of you... It is my sincere hope that you are the change this district has desperately needed for a long time!

Kandi, as always, thank you so much for your unwavering commitment to the children and families of our county. You have sacrificed greatly for the betterment of us all, and for that I am truly thankful!!

As a citizen of district 1 and a parent of a sophomore at Argonaut High School this email is in regard to the upcoming school year and perceived necessity for guidelines/mandates.

By definition a mandate is "an authoritative demand", likewise a guideline is "a statement or formal rule"... Both differ greatly from a written law, which next to the United States Constitution, is the highest law at the federal and state level.

Correct me if I'm wrong but I have not yet heard of the california state assembly or senate, let alone the United States House or Senate voting on, passing, and/or sending to the governor or President a written law in any regard to masks?

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=4e5c3ed6db&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A17069219051463127947Cmsg-f%3A1706921905146236980
I've heard it said that this season will generate resilience throughout all of our youth. While that may have some minimal truth, what I do know for a fact is what I see and experience myself. When an education system needs to unthinkably completely transform the way it orders its teachers to grade students based off of stats such as: As of March 2020 one ACUSD campus had over 45% of the students receiving failing grades, and other schools likely not much different...When this drastic of a transformation occurs, something is seriously wrong.

Statistically we know that covid-19’s impact on children is similar to a typical cold and flu season, as well as the death rate for them is now known to be near zero. Never in history have we reacted in such a way to a virus which 99%+ of the people who contract it, survive...

I recognize that covid-19 is real and can be fatal, however, I implore you to consider the lifetime of social emotional damage and future mental health catastrophe created within our children simply by the reaction we’ve displayed as a society over the last 16 months to it...

With respect and in humility I request that you recognize and enforce each able families right to make any and all health decisions for their children, this including whether or not children receive the vaccine, and especially now whether or not children wear a mask at school. The threats of litigation will come, the threats from the insurance company will come, the threats from the state will come, the threats from the health department will come.... But the destruction already done from the very same people who continue these threats is well documented and known by many. We’ve seen where that’s gotten us and I encourage you to take a new path and consider the God given individual rights of each student and family to make these health decisions on their own.

The response to this request from those who make the threats will be “they have a choice, they can choose to not participate in public education”... I would agree, as I do not believe that public education is a human right, however, I also know and understand the resiliency and conviction of thousands of parents throughout this community, and I see this mandate/directive, and it's possible consequences on what I believe to be a new energized Superintendent with the best of intentions and a school board which historically has spent many hours trying to put out fires which were unnecessarily intentionally self inflicted...

Thank you for your time and willingness to serve in a season such as this!

Prayerfully, Respectfully, and Sincerely,
Joel T. Mottishaw

Sent from my iPhone
Hello, and thank you for the opportunity to present the facts and data needed to assess whether our children should, or should not be wearing masks. First let me ask a simple question. Do you know any child in the age range of newborn, to 18 years old, who has died of, or with Covid? The answer is almost certainly no. In fact, the odds are about a million to one that you do. Here's why: According to the CDC, the number of children in that age range who have died WITH a positive covid diagnosis nation wide is 335 in a country of 330,000,000 people. The CDC has 21,000 employees, yet they have failed to research whether Covid caused the 335 deaths, or if they involved a pre-existing medical condition. So a study was conducted at Johns Hopkins which analyzed 48,000 children, 18 and under, with a positive Covid diagnosis. The mortality rate for these kids, without a pre-existing condition, such as leukemia? ZERO! Not-a-one. The failure of the CDC to research the deaths of those 335 children can only be considered one of two things. Either it's criminal negligence, or (in my opinion at least) outright malfeasance. Therefore, any recomendation by them must be addressed with common sense, and critical thought. What's the basis of the recomendation? Where's the data? That's pretty reasonable right? The facts and data are incontrovertible. School age children without a pre-existing condition are in no danger whatsoever from Covid. None. The only real danger is the wearing of masks itself, which can lead to Hypercapnia, (building up carbon dioxide in the bloodstream). Which is exactly what happens when you unnecessarily cover the mouth and nose of a person, forcing them to breath in their own carbon dioxide. Enough is enough. We denied children an entire year of social interaction, and in person learning. Kids were prevented from playing sports. My step son, who came over from the Philippines was just about to begin his first year of baseball, but had the opportunity ripped away. One day he was at practice, and the next day, sorry, the season's off. Sports are an extremally important development tool for kids. I feel horrible for everyone who's lost out on being able to participate. Last years senior class in particular, but all our kids have lost out on so much. We cannot allow this to continue. There is no reason at all! No masks. No restrictions. NO FEAR. Let our kids be kids. Let our voices be heard. Let the truth be known, and lets get back to it. Thank you for your time and attention. I will try to be there for this meeting, and hopefully be able to address you personally. My work schedule may interrupt this plan however. If that's the case, I would greatly appreciate your reading of this letter to the people present at the meeting.

Sincerely, Matt Garbani
Dear Amador County Unified School Board of Trustees and Dr. Gibson,

My name is Nikki Silveira-Bergen. I am a parent of two ACUSD students (one elementary and one junior high) and a teacher at Jackson Elementary School. I am submitting this public comment to express my full support for following the California Department of Public Health and Center for Disease Control's K-12 school opening guidelines for the 2021-2022 school year which includes the required universal masking of individuals while indoors, regardless of vaccination status.

As a resident, parent, and teacher within the district, my expectations of ACUSD is to keep my children, our students, the community, and staff safe by following state and federal public health guidelines. So, in addition to following the masking requirement, I expect ACUSD to have a plan in place to enforce it, as outlined in the CDPH requirements (e. Consistent with guidance from the 2020-21 school year, schools must develop and implement local protocols to enforce the mask requirements. Additionally, schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus because they will not wear a face covering, Note: Public schools should be aware of the requirements in AB 130 to offer independent study programs for the 2021-22 school year).

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Nikki Silveira-Bergen
Hello, my name is Cami Rust. I have 3 children who attend Ione Elementary. I ask that you do not force our children to wear masks. I believe that mask wearing should be optional. I have seen negative affects of mask wearing from declining self confidence to socially induced fear and stunted learning. While wearing masks, it is not possible for little kids to properly learn to pronounce words and learn letter sounds accurately. It is hard enough for kids to learn the difference between a “n” and “m” already and then you make it a muffled sound with masks and not being able to see their mouth?!?! The kids can’t copy the teachers mouth shape and the teachers can’t fully tell if the child is saying it correctly. My children can be soft spoken as it is. My kindergartner was in TK last year with an amazing teacher. She did the best that she could with the situation but she was not able to fully do her job. My son couldn’t understand some of what she was saying with her mask on. For example: numbers such as 13 and 14 he thinks she was saying thiriting or fourling etc. It is very hard if not impossible for little kids to hear the difference between “een” and “ing” through a mask. As a parent, I’ve worked on this at home but it’s hard when they think they’re hearing it one way at school and something different at home. It is way harder to correct something learned incorrectly than for them to learn it correctly in the first place.
I also, do not believe that masks are sanitary for wearing all day everyday. My second grader came home from school many times with a wet mask because of sweating. When kids (or adults) are hot and wearing masks, they tend to touch and adjust them more. This brings their hands (and germs) to their face way more than it would without a mask.
As a little side note, one day I asked my 8 year old daughter to throw a diaper away in a parking lot garbage can as I had just changed the baby. There were no people around whatsoever. She did not want to leave the car without her mask on. I informed her that she didn’t need a mask and just to not touch the garbage can. This is common sense anyway! Don’t touch gross dirty things. I had to force my 8 year old to throw it away without a mask on. She had been taught at school that if you take your mask off, you’ll get sick and maybe die from COVID. This is not ok! Kids need to be kids! Of course we don’t want them to get sick or for anyone to get sick. Instead, we need to teach them to wash their hands and cover their mouth/nose when sneezing or coughing and wash their hands again.
I earlier this month I took one of my children to the Dr for an annual checkup. The Doctor asked me questions about my child social behavior. He is noticing already in younger children that they are becoming afraid of any people not in their immediate family because of isolation. Children are losing the natural instincts of being social and interacting with others. This is going to be devastating in 10 or 15 years when this generation is out in the world but lack these sets of skills. I think I could go on and on about mask wearing but I think you understand my point. I know that you are in a tough situation. I just ask that you look at the entire picture. Please make the decision that is in the best interest of the children. They need to learn and live life without fear of getting sick or feeling uncomfortable. These kids need to play and interact with each other. This is important for their growth and well being. Please, please don’t let this be about politics.

Thank you,
Cami Rust

Sent from my iPhone
Superintendent Torie Gibson and Board of Trustee's

I would like to address the upcoming school year as far as face mask rules go. For one CDC guidelines are not laws they are suggestions to follow so please research when it comes to this decision. The American Medical Association, The American Institute for Economics Research, https://www.letthembreathe.net/ are just a few places where a person can do some research. If a parent wants to send the child to school with a mask that is great, they have that right to do so the same right we have not to wear a mask or send our child to school without a mask. There are multipool reliable studies out there that show that masking does not work and harms the kids worse mentally and physically with regards to increase CO2 levels. the kids need to be social and need their faces to be showed.

I would like to ask also who will be monitoring all this at School I think the teachers should be teaching and not having to deal with who is wearing a mask or who is not wearing a mask. Last year's School went ok the distance learning was alright but it's tough to do shop over the internet not all kids will go to college and we got the kids through it but now with the mask mandate looming again it will even tougher on them to focus on getting a proper education.

Thank you for the time.

Rusty Folena
COVID and masking policy response special meeting

Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 3:07 PM

To: "Kandi.t@acusd.org" <Kandi.t@acusd.org>, "deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org" <deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org>, "james.f.marzano@acusd.org" <james.f.marzano@acusd.org>, "jwhitaker@acusd.org" <jwhitaker@acusd.org>, "julia.burns@acusd.org" <julia.burns@acusd.org>, Torie Gibson <torie.gibson@acusd.org>

I am including a letter with my thoughts and opinion of masking in Amador County Schools. I appreciate its consideration. I am against masks at this point and am on board with re-evaluating that policy as data is presented that actually shows a need for masks in schools.

Scott Wagner
Sutter Creek CA, 95685

Letter to schoolboard.docx

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=4e5c3ed6db&view=pt&search=all&permthid=1#thread-f%3A1707020957804015707%7Cmsg-f%3A1707020957804...
With the arrival of the Delta Variant, I watch with apprehension as school boards across our state make knee jerk reactions in regards to masks in the school districts. This policy has never been grounded in facts, study after study have proven that kids are not primary spreaders and that infection/hospitalization/death rates involving the under 18 population has stayed solidly at basically 0%. I am completely against a mask mandate in our schools and the science backs my assertion. I write today to ask that you make the correct choice by giving the freedom to the parents and students to make their own choice. I am behind the policy being re-evaluated as evidence changes. But at this point, including all information that is current, kids don’t need masks in schools. I fully support any staff or students that feel they need to wear them that they should have that choice.

As the delta variant no doubt is going to be the splash headline over the coming month as it spreads, it will be easy to just default on “safety”. I truly hope that we don’t get buried in the headlines and sensational statistics that make people believe that this is worse than it is. The numbers need to be firmly grounded in reality and with context. I fear that COVID is here to stay and we all will be dealing with this for years to come. I fear that school shutdowns are coming before accurate information is presented.

Statistics across the United States have painted a clear picture on the effects of COVID on children. Of the 49,000 Americans under the age of 18 that have died since the beginning of the pandemic, only 331 have been from COVID. That is half the number of deaths attributed to pneumonia. In 2019 alone, 2000 kids died from car crashes, 1000 from drowning; more kids died from heart disease, suicide, or homicide than COVID. While those under age 18 account for 20% of America’s population, they only account for 0.05% of COVID deaths. The fatality rate for kids aged 5-9 is even lower, at 0.01%, that is 1/10,000 the risk of an 85 year old senior. Those same overwhelming statistics also can be found in hospitalization rates. While these statistics are sad and could possibly be more preventable, COVID does not rank on the list of things kids or their parents should be worrying about when it comes to dangers to our children. The inordinate attention placed on schools and children has not been justified and at some point needs to stop. The fact is, that until a community has a serious COVID infection rate, schools are not a factor.

During the 2020/21 school year, millions of kids across the country attended school in person many without restrictions. While no doubt COVID cases were reported, it was not as widespread or detrimental to the health of students as has been implied. This includes many students right here in California in both public and private schools.

Across the country, mask mandates in schools are being shot down including right here in this state. There are millions of kids that attended the last year of school without masks and if the evidence was there, we would have all seen it by now. Schools are starting up and with the new variant currently spreading it should not be very long from now that we will be able to see new data to give us maybe a different strategy. At this point, we don’t need to be making a knee jerk reaction and overdramatizing the issue.

Scott Wagner
August 2, 2021

Dear School Board Trustees and Superintendent Gibson,

Included in the Amador County School Board “Unity of Purpose” statement are these words: “to... foster social, emotional, and physical well-being for all students.” Of course, these goals are what we all want for our children.

Social and emotional development result from interaction with others. The question now is, can students be physically safe in the classroom with waves of the covid virus and its variants sweeping across our country, our state, our county of Amador?

We the undersigned: retired teachers and staff, parents, and grandparents, recognize the great importance of children being in the classroom with their peers. We also recognize that unless there is strict adherence to the guidelines put forth by the C.D.C., our governor, and our public health director, Dr. Kerr, a half-hearted attempt (such as allowing masks to be worn under the nose or chin)would have the same result as no attempt at all. We feel that masking is extremely important for the general health of the population, but also for those students who are immune-compromised and for the families who would be exposed to the virus through their school-attending children. We all have all endured a long period of time with all kinds of restrictions. Let's be vigilant and responsible and do all that we can to conquer the dangers of covid.

Sincerely,

Nancy Moore
Kim Brandson
Judy Ferrell
Lacey Bartich
To whom may concern,

I strictly oppose the mask mandates, and would like to be heard at the next board meeting. I oppose masking children for the following reasons; children are of low risk of severe reactions to SARS-COV-2, there are studies that show developmental problems because of masks, those who are vaccinated are relatively safe from SARS-COV-2, children are unlikely to adhere to the mask mandates, and there is nothing stopping COVID-19. I'm confident that we all have had enough of this, and the only way to be reasonable is to leave it up to the parents.

There are many others who oppose this mandate, and many who are for the mask. Involving politics is unnecessary for a subject that is drowning in opinions no matter what your science states. Either way there will be no winner, so what makes the most sense is leaving the decision to the parents. Those who are weary of the virus should be welcome to continue distance learning, anyone who wants their children to be in school are welcome to do so with or without a mask. In all, this seems like a petty rule that will be broken by many children as shown over the past year by adults. Below are a variety of studies showing one shouldn't mask children.

"The typical mask you buy in the drug store is not really effective in keeping out virus, which is small enough to pass through the material. It might, however, provide some slight benefit in keep out gross droplets if someone coughs or sneezes on you. I do not recommend you wear a mask," Fauci wrote in an email on February 5, 2020.

William M. Briggs, PhD.

https://wmbriggs.com/post/35227/
https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.05.18.21257385v1

Article from University of Southern California:
https://healthpolicy.usc.edu/article/mandatory-masking-of-school-children-is-a-bad-idea/
COVID and the 2021-2022 School Year

1 message

Andrea McGuickin
To: kandi.l@acUSD.org, deborah.pulskamp@acUSD.org, james.f.marzano@acUSD.org, jwhitaker@acUSD.org, Julia.burns@acUSD.org, torie.gibson@acUSD.org

Superintendent Gibson and Board Members,

First off, I would like to thank Mrs. Gibson for allowing parents to write a letter of concern prior to this very important board meeting. I believe a lot of parents felt very unheard during the prior school year, an opportunity like this was never presented and letters were rarely acknowledged. To allow the space for concerned parents to express our point of view, and have it distributed amongst the board members, I believe will give parents peace of mind that their opinion and concerns will be heard and considered.

I am writing to you as a parent of a soon to be first grader at Jackson Elementary. My daughter attended JES the previous school year, and rotated through all of the different learning modalities: distance learning, hybrid, and a 4-day school week. We are grateful that our daughter was one of the children that thrived in each situation, a blessing that both my husband and I have not lost sight of or taken for granted. She absolutely loves school, loves to learn, loves meeting new friends on campus, and it so very much looking forward to the coming school year. It will come as no surprise that her biggest complaint of her kinder year was having to wear a mask. My husband and I could turn a blind eye and send our daughter with a mask, if it made sense and the science proved that it was beneficial in any way shape or form for the pandemic and/or our child. However, the science does not back this up.

To shorten my email, since I'm sure you will receive many to read through, I'll bullet some points and articles I feel show that masks are not the saving grace that many have been led to believe:

1. A study conducted in 2015 and published on the National Center for Biotechnology Information states that "Moisture retention, reuse of cloth masks and poor filtration may result in increased risk of infection. Penetration of cloth masks by particles was almost 97% and medical masks 44%." A cluster randomised trial of cloth masks compared with medical masks in healthcare workers (nih.gov)
2. From 3M who produces disposable surgical masks: "surgical/procedure masks cannot provide certified respiratory protection unless they are also designed, tested, and government-certified as a respirator. If a wearer wants to reduce inhalation of smaller, inhalable particles (those smaller than 100 microns), they need to obtain and properly use a government-certified respirator, such as a NIOSH-approved N95 filtering facepiece particulate respirator." Respirators and Surgical Masks: A Comparison (googleusercontent.com)
3. An article published by the CDC in May of 2020 clearly states that "Masks are not effective at preventing flu spread." Nonpharmaceutical Measures for Pandemic Influenza in Nonhealthcare Settings—Personal Protective and Environmental Measures - Volume 26, Number 5—May 2020 - Emerging Infectious Diseases journal - CDC

As I see it, the bottom line is this: this pandemic is not our children's burden to bear. During no other time in human history, or any animal species for that matter, has the young had to endure or sacrifice hardships in order to benefit others. Children are meant to play and interact and love and explore their environment in order to grow and develop into confident and capable adults. As a parent, it is hard to stand by and watch thousands of people congregate at the fair this past weekend, knowing that my child may have to wear a mask to "help stop the spread."

Please, please allow parents to make the informed, medical decision for their children. Please let these kids have a piece of childhood back that they had missed out on last year. Please let masks be a recommendation and not a mandate.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Andrea McGuickin
School Mask Policy
1 message

Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 5:35 PM
Trevor McGuckin <trevormcguickin@gmail.com>
To: Torie.gibson@acusd.org, Kandi.t@acusd.org, kandi.thompson@acusd.org, Deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org, James.f.marzano@acusd.org, Jwhitaker@acusd.org, Julia.burns@acusd.org

Ms. Gibson & School Board,

I strongly encourage you to do everything within your authority to not require or not enforce children wearing masks at school for this upcoming school year. I believe wearing masks at school for a prolonged period of time has a significant negative effect on the children’s mental and physical health which is not being considered by the groups and people advocating for masks to be worn in school. Below and attached are some of the emails I have written this past school year to try and provide perspective and encourage change that benefits the children. I hope you take the time to read this and understand the sincerity of my concern. I understand that there are many different things to consider when making decisions, but I strongly believe that the students should always be the number one priority of the school district. Please consider that when making decisions on this and any other matter of policy.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Thanks,

Trevor McGuckin

Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 11:10 PM
From: Trevor McGuckin
To: Kandi Thompson <kandi.thompson@acusd.org>
Cc: Andrea McGuckin

Thank you for the quick reply! We could get a note from her doctor no problem, but unfortunately we’ve read and been told that with a doctors note she will still be required to wear a face shield and/or would have to be isolated from the other kids and not participate in group activities.

My concern is that everyone is strictly enforcing the letter of the law when it isn’t necessary, especially in our community with very minimal impact from the pandemic and especially lately. I want to encourage the school administrators and teacher to do what’s right and what’s best for the kids rather than what the state law strictly says. That is the way most places of business in our community are handling this pandemic. They do their best and people do what people do. It seems to be working and most adults utilize their free will. Unfortunately the kids seem to be the only ones that are still being forced to comply.

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I’m sorry if this seems like just another parent complaining. I really would like to inspire some change and I would hope that my daughter’s situation would shed light on the fact that these rules are doing more harm than good.

We had the opportunity to send our daughter to a private school in El Dorado County that does not require children to wear masks (unless they want to) and allows them to interact and go to school 5 days per week. We chose to keep her here in the public school system because we believe in this community and want to be part of it. My wife and I both grew up here and attended the local public schools. After college we both moved back and started our family here. We want our kids to enjoy the benefits of this small community the way we were able to.

Thank you for hearing me out. I really appreciate it. Please let me know if there is something I can do to help inspire some change in the outlook on these rules. This school year is almost over but I want to make sure next year is different.

Thanks,
Trevor McGuckin

On May 18, 2021, at 2:09 PM, Kandi Thompson <kandi.thompson@acusd.org> wrote:

Hi Trevor,

Thank you so much for your email.

I share the exact same concern with you as I have two children in the district that have to wear masks every day as well. I have brought this topic up several times and the problem for my children is that they don’t have any underlying health conditions. However, if your doctor were to tell you that your daughter could not wear a mask due to her asthma, that would be an exception that the school would have to follow. Especially considering that she is having trouble breathing while wearing the mask. I have trouble breathing wearing the masks and I don’t have asthma. I can’t imagine how hard that would be if I did.

I have forwarded your message on to the Superintendent to see if this could be an exception without a doctors note, but do believe with a doctors note there would be no question.

Thank you again for your email and please reach out to me anytime with any questions, concerns, comments or victories your daughter has.

Sincerely,

Kandi Thompson

Amador County School Board Trustee - District 1
Amador County Unified School District

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=4e5c3ed6db&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1707030285543511434%7Cn.
On May 18, 2021, at 10:27 AM, Trevor McGuckin wrote:

Hi Mrs. Thompson,

I have many concerns regarding the school mask policy and enforcement. Specifically I think the kids and their parents should have the right to choose if they want to wear a mask or not.

I don't know who else to go to in an effort to inspire changes, so I'm reaching out to you. Is this something the school board can influence? Is there something else I can do to help this situation? Please let me know if you have any ideas or can help with this situation.

Thank you so much for your time and help,
Trevor McGuckin

Begin forwarded message:

From: Trevor McGuckin
Date: May 18, 2021 at 9:47:45 AM PDT
To: bmagusao@acusd.org
Cc: Andrea McGuckin, Kayley Waklee
Subject: Fwd: School Mask Policy

Hi Ms. Magpusao,

Would it be possible to provide some lenience on the mask policy and allow my daughter, Violet McGuckin, to attend class and recess with no mask? Violet's mother, Andrea, was just called to bring Violet her inhaler because she is struggling to breath and having asthma symptoms. Yesterday when we picked Violet up from school she informed us that she was having trouble breathing and needed her inhaler. When we asked her more about it she said she was having a hard time breathing all day but didn't say anything.

We do not make Violet wear a mask any other time besides school and she never has asthma symptoms and never needs her inhaler. She didn't get her
inhaler until she started school and having to wear a mask all day. She runs around and plays all weekend long inside and outside and never has any struggle breathing.

Is there any way we could get an exemption or just a turned eye so that she doesn't have to wear a mask at school? I understand that there are rules and regulations, but those rules and regulations exists everywhere and are rarely followed by adults in our community. Violet is not sick and when she is we keep her home. She nor anyone in our family or anyone she has been around have contracted COVID this entire pandemic. The spread of COVID in our community is so incredibly small right now. The risk she poses to her classmates and the teachers and staff at school is infinitesimally small and barely, if at all, reduced by her wearing a mask. The mask is, however, certainly effecting her physical and mental health.

If there is anything I can do to help in this situation please let me know. My heart breaks seeing my daughter struggle breathing because she has to wear a mask. We want to send her to school because she thrives and loves it so much and learns so much from Mrs. Waklee. But it is getting very challenging for me to accept these rules that effect my kids health and well-being.

Thank you so much for your consideration. Please reach out any time of any day if you would like to discuss.

Thanks,
Trevor McGuckin

Begin forwarded message:

From: Amy Slavensky <aslavensky@acusd.org>
Date: May 17, 2021 at 1:00:45 PM PDT
To: Trevor McGuckin <trevor mcguckin@acusd.org>, Andrea McGuckin <andrea mcguckin@acusd.org>, Barbara Magpupasao <barbara magpupasao@acusd.org>, Sean Snider <ssnider@acusd.org>
Subject: Re: School Mask Policy

Hello Trevor,

Thank you for expressing your concerns and requests. As a California public school that receives state funds from the government, we must follow all CDE and CDPH guidelines. Regarding face masks, please see the 3/20/2021 CDPH guidance here:

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=4e5c3ed6db&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1707030285543511434%7Cmsg-f%3A1707030285543511434...
Face coverings must be used in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless a person is exempt as explained in the guidelines.

- Information contained in the CDPH Guidance for the Use of FaceCoverings should be provided to staff and families of students. The face covering guidance applies to all settings, including schools. The guidance discusses the circumstances in which face coverings must be worn and the exemptions, as well as any policies, work rules, and practices employers have adopted to ensure the use of face coverings.

- Teach and reinforce use of face coverings, or in limited instances, faceshields with drapes.

- Students and staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

- Information should be provided to all staff and families in the school community on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.

- Training should also include policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a face covering will be addressed.

- Students in all grade levels K-12 are required to wear face coverings at all times, while at school, unless exempted.

Source: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID19-K12-Schools-InPerson-Instruction.aspx

I understand the frustration and concerns. All of us are covid and mask weary. The good news is that it's getting better each day and hopefully, with more people getting the vaccine, we'll move to the yellow tier in our county and have more restrictions removed. Please contact your child's teacher or principal if you need more support.

Sincerely,
Dr. Slavensky

On Sat, May 15, 2021 at 12:11 AM Trevor McGuckin wrote:

Hi Dr. Slavensky,

Are there any plans to update Amador County policies regarding wearing masks in public schools, particularly for...
younger students in elementary school? Prior to the latest update (2/10/21), the ACUSD health and safety plan recommended that students grade 2 and below wear masks, but it was not required. Since the 2/10/21 update it has been required that all students wear masks at school.

It seems the landscape of the pandemic is much different than it was back in February so perhaps another revision to those guidelines is warranted. If that is the plan I would strongly encourage revising the mask policy to a recommendation rather than a requirement, at least for the youngest students. I notice around the community that mask wearing has substantially decreased in all settings except for young kids who are being forced to follow the rules. These same kids are also the ones who are least susceptible to negative physical health impacts from the Covid virus.

From my experience as a parent I see that kids being forced to wear masks creates fear and anxiety that I’m worried will be long lasting and challenging to mitigate. Additionally, my daughter in particular has a very difficult time breathing in a mask and ever since she has been forced to wear one at school we have had to take her to the doctor who prescribed her an inhaler for asthma symptoms that she never had before.

It does not seem fair that these innocent young kids have to bear the burden of this pandemic. They are statistically least likely to have any negative physical health impacts from the virus and there has been little evidence to show that them wearing masks at school is effective in reducing the spread of the Covid virus.

Please stop making our kids wear masks at school. It is not necessary and does more harm than good for these kids. We need to support the children in our community now more than ever. They have gone through so much from this pandemic and we need to provide them with an environment that they can thrive and find joy.

I would love to discuss this more if anyone is willing to hear out more of my perspective and concerns. Reach out anytime.

Thanks,
Trevor McGuckin

Amy L. Slavensky, Ph.D., Superintendent
Amador County Unified School District
217 Rex Avenue, Jackson, CA 95642
(209) 257-5353

OUR MISSION
Enriched by the diversity and deep traditions of our unique community, Amador County Public Schools will prepare, support, and inspire each student to achieve career and college success in a rapidly evolving world through highly engaging teaching, rigorous learning and innovative pathways supported by strong partnerships in a safe, caring, and collaborative environment.

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---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: Trevor McGucken
To: <aslavensky@acusd.org>
Cc: Andrea McGucken
Bcc:
Date: Wed, 28 Oct 2020 00:06:30 -0700
Subject: Physical vs Mental Health Risk Question - School Reopening
Dr. Slavensky,

Thank you for all of your hard work managing the reopening of schools during the coronavirus pandemic. I understand this is not an easy task and there is no clear answer that will meet the needs of everyone in the community.

Can you or someone in your office please help me understand the following:
- Are the PPE requirements for teachers (i.e. face mask and face shield) mandated by the principle, school district, state government, or others? Is the PPE just a suggestion/guideline or are there consequences for non-compliance? What is the justification for requiring a teacher to wear both a face mask and a face shield? What is the justification for requiring a teacher to wear any face covering in a classroom whose students aren’t required to wear a face covering in the classroom (i.e. Kindergarten)?
- Has any consideration been given to the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of the children who are going to be exposed to the proposed environment of strict COVID risk reduction measures (i.e. no social interaction/touching, no recess, no shared toys, face covering mandates, physical barriers, etc.)? Has the mental health risk been weighed at each grade level during the development of guidelines and rules for physical health risk reduction? Has a mental health professional been consulted about how we can expect this proposed environment to effect children’s mental health in both the short and long term? If so, is their opinion published somewhere for me to read?
- I understand that all of the published guidelines aim to reduce the spread of coronavirus and therefore lower the physical health impacts to the community, but I also understand that each risk reduction measure targets a different magnitude of risk and the efficacy of each measure is highly dependent on the ability to implement the guideline properly. Have these factors been analyzed when developing the risk reduction policies for school reopening? Has an analysis been done to compare the amount of risk being reduced to the subsequent risk that is created? Has any consideration went into what risks these policies create (i.e. anxiety and fear in children, logistical challenges for working parents, a substandard learning environment, hassle and stress for teachers attempting to enforce these policies, etc.)?

I apologize if this information is already published. I attempted to research the CDC, state, school district, and school websites but was unable to find answers for my specific concerns. My daughter is in Kindergarten at Jackson Elementary and I am having a hard time understanding why the school reopening plan includes such strict risk reduction measures.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Trevor McGucken

Physical vs Mental Health Risk Question - School Reopening.eml
10K

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Dear ACUSD Board of Trustees,

I received an email from Sean Snider instructing Amador residents to send an email with concerns to all the listed email contacts that I’m sending this to. The email discussed the intention of the board to discuss mask requirements for the upcoming school year. Although I know that many people in the county will strongly disagree with my opinion, I don’t think the mask or no mask is the primary argument that should be occurring at this moment. The Amador County Public Health Department reported 98 new COVID-19 cases in the last ten days (as of July 30th). If California still used the colored tier system to measure the risk in our county, this would equate to three and a half times the threshold for the purple tier and schools would not be permitted to open. Since our county’s infection rate has reached these extreme numbers, I feel that there should be a discussion of whether schools should be open for in-person instruction or if we should continue with the distance learning in the way that we began last school year. Again, I understand that this is not a popular opinion in our area, but I feel that it is important to open this topic to a serious discussion. If the county does decide to continue with its plans to open for in-person instruction, then we should have additional conversations about the many safety measures that will need to be implemented including mask requirements, distancing, and how to prevent the spread of the virus during meal times. Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns on the matter, and I appreciate that you have agreed to review all possible options.

Sincerely,
Pete Henry
Dear Amador County School Board,

Thank you for giving parents the opportunity to share our opinions regarding children wearing masks in the classroom during the 2021-2022 school year.

I am concerned a mom with two students at Jackson Elementary School. Given what doctors know about the COVID virus I do not agree what so ever with children having to mask up in class.

- I have spoken to multiple pediatrician’s and have researched the data that shows that children are NOT super spreaders. They do do not transmit the virus like adults do. They are more likely to pick COVID up from an adult. My youngest son was in preschool through the majority of COVID. Not once did the school close, there was no out break. The kids were NOT in masks. My oldest was in Jackson Elementary in the hybrid model and again no class quarantine or school quarantine. My son was wearing masks and he still came down with a few viruses. In an article written by Nicole Saphier, M.D. "If we compare what has occurred in the U.K., which is coming down from its Delta wave, the younger people (15-39 years) drive new cases but hospitalizations and deaths in those <15 years approached zero. Not to mention, the U.K. had their schools open without mask mandates for much of the Delta wave". I think a lot can be learned from other countries who have been dealing with the delta variant and what they did and the outcomes.

- Face masks also have potential disadvantages, it can make verbal and non-verbal communication more difficult. Both of my sons keep touching their masks pulling the mask off and on, which in-turn increase germs from their nose and mouth onto their hands to be past onto anything that they touch. My younger son sucks on his mask. This makes a perfect breeding ground for bacteria to grow in a warm moist environment.

- I am also concerned that some parents will send their kids to school with minor symptoms that can be hidden behind a mask instead of keeping them
Children are able to eat lunch together with masks. There are times that they cannot eat outside due to weather/season turns and air quality from smoke. While eating inside the same room they are all breathing the same air. No matter how much ventilation there is, it’s inevitable that kids will be sharing the same air at some point. I feel with proper ventilation along with proper hand washing and teaching kids to be aware of any coughing and sneezing and how to shield the spray by coughing or sneezing into Kleenex, sleeve, arm will help to ease the spread of any germs. If parents continue to keep all children at home this will help keep germs at bay.

It’s extremely upsetting that you hear all over the news and internet that masks are safe.....where is the science evidence. I could only find a few studies. All of the studies I have read specified that more research is needed. This is the first time that children who are still developing where faces masks for long periods of time. There is not enough evidence to support one way or another. Children are not science experiments.

One way or another we as a society will need to learn how to live with COVID. Even with vaccines it will still circulate as the flu does and the virus will change over time. Our children have suffered enough.

Again thank you for your time on this important matter.

Regards,
Cristina Alcon

On Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 5:04 PM Sean Snider <SSNIDER@acusd.org> wrote:

July 27, 2021

Dear Amador County Parents/Guardians and Community Members,

Amador County Unified School District prides itself upon providing the best possible learning environment for every student. To make this possible we ask for input from all stakeholders on various topics. We know our community is currently concerned about COVID-19 protocols and plans, specifically around the topic of mask mandates in the classroom setting and the overall well-being of their child.

On Wednesday, August 4th at 5:30pm, the Amador County Unified School District Board of Trustees will hold a special board meeting to discuss our local COVID-19 Safety Plan for the 2021-2022 school year, and specifically the issue of mask requirements while inside school buildings. The meeting will be held at 810 Court St. in Jackson, as well as livestreamed by KVGC on their Facebook page. Together, the community-informed school board will decide how mask requirements will be enforced in the classroom setting with the help of the Public Health Director, Dr. Rita Kerr, input from the district’s insurance carrier, legal counsel, and district leadership as we review all possible options.

Unfortunately, we may not have enough time for all stakeholders to speak in person on August 4th. The public comment portion of meetings are limited to 3 minutes per individual, with a 20-minute maximum per topic. For example, this means the issues related to mask requirements in the classroom setting will be limited to a total of 20 minutes of public comment. To accommodate all stakeholders and ensure all voices heard, we encourage you to submit your comments in writing to the board and myself no later than Monday, August 2nd at 6:00pm (email addresses are provided below). Unless requested otherwise, all public comments submitted will be compiled and distributed to each board member and published in the board packet on Tuesday, August 3rd.
We understand the historical event we find ourselves living through is challenging to navigate, and no one person's experience mimics another's. The best foreseeable avenue for student success defines itself through encouraging open dialogue and a communal effort towards success. Our number one priority is always the safety of students and staff, while also keeping students at school Monday through Friday for full day instruction.

PUBLIC COMMENT EMAIL ADDRESSES - Please send to all listed below no later than Monday, August 2nd at 6:00pm to allow for review and board packet distribution:

President: Kandi Thompson (Area 1) - Kandi.t@acusd.org
Clerk: Deborah Pulskamp (Area 2) - Deborah.pulskamp@acusd.org
Trustee: James Marzano (Area 3) - James.f.marzano@acusd.org
Trustee: Jim Whitaker (Area 4) - Jwhitaker@acusd.org
Trustee: Julia Burns (Area 5) - Julia.burns@acusd.org

Superintendent: Torie Gibson - Torie.gibson@acusd.org

My office operates under an open-door policy, so please reach out directly any time with questions or concerns. I can be reached at 209-257-5353, and my email is torie.gibson@acusd.org.

Sincerely,

Torie F. Gibson, Ed.D.

This message has been sent on behalf of Amador County Unified School District. If you do not wish to receive any future email from Amador County Unified School District, please click here. This message is intended exclusively for the individual or entity to which it is addressed. This communication may contain information that is proprietary, privileged or confidential or otherwise legally exempt from disclosure. If you are not the named addressee, you are not authorized to read, print, retain, copy or disseminate this message or any part of it. If you have received this message in error, please notify district administration and delete all copies of the message.
Superintendent Torie Gibson and Our Elected Amador County School Board Representatives,

I would like to address the upcoming school year 2021-22 as far as face mask rules go. CDC guidelines are NOT LAWS they are SUGGESTIONS to follow. I employ you to do your research when it comes to this decision. The American Medical Association, The American Institute for Economics Research, https://www.letthembreathe.net/ are just a few places where a person can do some research. If a parent wants to send their child to school with a mask that is great, they have that right to do so the same right we have not to wear a mask or send our child to school without a mask. There are many reliable studies out there that show that masking does not work and harms the kids worse mentally and physically with regards to increased CO2 levels. My Child needs to be social! THEY CRAVE IT and need their faces to be shown.

I would also like to ask who will be monitoring all this at school, I think the teachers should be teaching and not having to deal with who is wearing a mask or who is not wearing a mask. If the school wants staff to wear masks (because of insurance reasons or the personnel’s comfort level etc.) and continues to encourage hand washing, and do their part to daily sanitize that will be sufficient.

Last school years combined distant learning/regular day was just completely sad and did not support my child’s education at ALL! I know at that time we were doing our best to figure this mess out but it just didn’t work!! You just can’t do all learning over zoom classes. It’s tough to do a hands-on shop over the internet. Not all kids will go to college. We got the kids through it but now with the mask mandate looming again it will be even tougher on them to focus on getting a proper education.

Support a family choice to send their child to class with or without a mask. Let’s get our kids to school and back to learning.

Thank you for the time
Beverly Folena
There was a time when the school #1 priority was to educate, not to make medical decisions. It is the parents responsibility to determine how, why and if their child should or should not wear a mask. Only the parents know the emotional damage already inflicted by forced face covering. Fear of breathing, fear of touch resulting in depression as isolation.
Forced to wear a mask teaches that fear of death is the only way to live.
PLEASE
UNMASK OUR CHILDREN
LET THEM BREATHE

Sent from my iPhone
Good Afternoon,

I am emailing you as a means to share our opinions on mask mandates in school. Please include this email in the board packet.

I am a very involved mother of three children (upcoming 3rd, 7th and 8th). All of my children have had negative experiences with masks and I’d like to share a just a few personal experiences with you.

8 years old - 2nd graders rely on social cues. Who is happy? Who is mad? Who seems upset? Their friendships thrive on social cues - smiles, laughs, funny faces. When faces are covered, emotions are hidden. They lose the ability to “read the room” and this going on for as long as it has, is unnerving. They shouldn’t forget what their friends faces look like or never know what their teachers smile looks like.

12 years old - imagine being soft spoken and shy, unsure of yourself. When you speak, oftentimes people ask you to repeat yourself because they couldn’t hear you. Now imagine that voice being muffled with a mask. Do you know what happens? An entire school year where you don’t speak at school. You lose friends. Some of your teachers think you’re disinterested and place no value on your voice because you never use it. Why should you use it? No one can hear you anyway. You cry after school because you feel detached but you can’t fix it yourself. Your school is failing you. In the year you could have blossomed, you have retreated. That’s what
has happened to my sweet daughter and it KILLS me that I was powerless.

13 years old - at first, she was fine. Masks meant she got to see her friends and finally relate to her teachers in person. Then headaches started, light headedness. She said she would have bouts of hearing issues, like someone was cupping their hands over her ears. Cue the panic attacks, anxiety attacks. When she mentions to the teacher that she thinks the masks are causing the issues, her teacher says she is making it up to have a mask break. She was accused of lying in order to get fresh air. (Read that last line again.) She is chronically dehydrated because she has to go outside to take off her mask to drink water and too many water breaks is distributive to the class. She is an exceptionally healthy teenager. Active in sports and eats healthier than most adults. It doesn’t add up. If you research carbon dioxide toxicity (also referred to as Hypercapnia - article linked below) you will see these symptoms among a many others. We are not meant our own CO2 for hours on end. This has to stop.

The kids are resilient is a cop out. That’s what people say when they refuse to make the necessary changes to help the children out. We are raising the future leaders of the world and the institution that was created strictly FOR them to grow and thrive, is failing them. Our state is failing them. By the time we find out just how resilient our children are, it will be too late. Please, please consider optional masks for the 2021/2022 school year. The School Board is collectively the voice for the children and you each set the example for leadership within our community. Leaders do not say “Our hands are tied.” Leaders say “I will find a way.”

Many school districts in our state are standing up against these mandates. The following districts have taken the first step in supporting parent choice by allowing mask exemptions or mask choice for students: Wheatland High, Roseville Joint Unified High School, Yorba Linda Unified,
Ripon Unified, Beaumont Unified, Clovis Unified, Orland Unified.

Parent choice is the best option for ALL children as it restricts no freedoms of any and supports equal education and experiences for all.

Thank you for your time,
Chrystile Woods

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypercapnia

https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/children-should-not-be-forced-to-wear-masks-due-to-co2-levels-new-study-suggests/ar-AALFKTk?fbclid=IwAR2A4Obu07fgKGRxr4QFhqtCfJn7FnHq0Xnx4FGdT0EYBMZ-P_1AN8hE8

https://www.aier.org/article/masking-children-tragic-unscientific-and-damaging/?fbclid=IwAR3Kprh7kSvFFq2MxmK2k2xO2PZKSd__qINuoHV8HozzmFbCtDOdGmhfc
Amador County Unified School District
217 Rex Avenue
Jackson, CA 95642

Attn: Trustees Kandi Thompson, Deborah Pulsamp, James Marzano, Jim Whitaker, Julia Burns and Superintendent Torie Gibson

Dear Amador County Unified School District Board of Trustees,

I write to urge the Amador County Unified School District Board of Trustees to consider the request from a concerned group of parents calling for the elimination of mask mandate rules for the upcoming school year.

I believe a free society allows its citizens to make their own decisions over what risks they are willing to run and what precautions they are willing to take according to their own circumstances to protect their health. Individuals’ assessment of risk might convince them to avoid crowded theaters or restaurants, wash their hands more frequently, avoid handshakes, or wear masks. These acts don’t require force and don’t make demands on others. They are a matter of individual judgment and choice.

The Amador County parents’ request emboldens this principle, to allow the citizens of a free society to have the option to determine what is best for their children’s health. I support the efforts of the Amador County parents and urge the Amador County Unified School District Board of Trustees to give back the peoples’ control over their own health matters.

Should you have any questions, please contact Kelsey Gaudette in my office at (202) 225-2511.

Sincerely,

Tom McClintock
State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health

July 12, 2021

TO: All Californians

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year

Related Materials: CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings | Safe Schools for All Hub | K-12 Schools Testing Framework 2021-2022

On July 9, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published its updated recommendations for K-12 schools. The following guidance applies CDC’s recommendations to the California context, in order to help K-12 schools formulate and implement plans for safe, successful, and full in-person instruction in the 2021-22 school year. This guidance is effective immediately and will be reviewed regularly by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

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. In California, the surest path to safe and full in-person instruction at the outset of the school year, as well as minimizing missed school days in an ongoing basis, is a strong emphasis on the following: vaccination for all eligible individuals to get COVID-19 rates down throughout the community; universal masking in schools, which enables no minimum physical distancing, allowing all students access to full in-person learning; and more targeted quarantine practices, keeping students in school; and access to a robust COVID-19 testing program as an available additional safety layer. Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are fully implemented. This is consistent with CDC K-12 School 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.
Finally, this approach takes into account a number of key considerations: current unknowns associated with variants and in particular the Delta Variant, which is more transmissible; operational barriers of tracking vaccination status in order to monitor and enforce mask wearing; and potential detrimental effects on students of differential mask policies. Detrimental effects of differential mask policies include: potential stigma, bullying, isolation of vaccinated OR unvaccinated students, depending on the culture and attitudes in the school or surrounding community.

**CDPH will continue to assess conditions on an ongoing basis, and will determine no later than November 1, 2021, whether to update mask requirements or recommendations.** Indicators, conditions, and science review will include vaccination coverage status, in consideration of whether vaccines are available for children under 12, community case and hospitalization rates, outbreaks, and ongoing vaccine effectiveness against circulating variants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 in alignment with the CDC-recommended indicators to guide K-12 school operations.

This guidance is designed to enable all schools to offer and provide full in-person instruction to all students safely, consistent with the current scientific evidence about COVID-19, even if pandemic dynamics shift throughout the school year, affected by vaccination rates and the potential emergence of viral variants.

This guidance includes mandatory requirements, in addition to recommendations and resources to inform decision-making. Implementation requires training and support for staff and adequate consideration of student and family needs. Stricter guidance may be issued by local public health officials or other authorities.

**COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for all eligible people in California, including teachers, staff, students, and adults sharing homes with these members of our K-12 communities.** See CDC recommendations about how to promote vaccine access and uptake for schools. Additional California-specific vaccine access information is available on the Safe Schools Hub and Vaccinate All 58 – Let’s Get to Immunity.

In workplaces, employers are subject to the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) or in some workplaces the Cal/OSHA Aerosol Transmissible Diseases Standard, and should consult those regulations for additional applicable requirements.

**General Considerations:**

Consideration should be given to both the direct school population as well as the surrounding community. The primary factors to consider include: 1) level of community transmission of COVID-19; 2) COVID-19 vaccination coverage in the community and among students, faculty, and staff; and 3) any local COVID-19 outbreaks or increasing trends. Discussion of these factors should occur in collaboration with local or state public health partners.

As the CDC explained in its July 9, 2021 Guidance:

> “Schools will have a mixed population of both people who are fully vaccinated and people who are not fully vaccinated. These variations require K-12 administrators to make decisions about the use of COVID-19 prevention strategies in their schools to protect people who are not fully vaccinated. Together with local public health officials, school administrators should consider multiple factors when they make decisions about implementing layered prevention strategies against COVID-19.”
In an effort to streamline and tailor this decision-making process for the California context, guidance regarding each of the measures that can be used in a layered prevention strategy is provided below.

**Safety Measures for K-12 Schools**

1. **Masks**
   
   a. Masks are optional outdoors for all in K-12 school settings.
   
   b. K-12 students are required to mask indoors, with exemptions per CDPH face mask guidance. Adults in K-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.
   
   c. Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, 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.
   
   d. Schools must develop and implement local protocols to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions.
   
   e. Consistent with guidance from the 2020-21 school year, schools must develop and implement local protocols to enforce the mask requirements. Additionally, schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus because they will not wear a face covering. Note: Public schools should be aware of the requirements in AB 130 to offer independent study programs for the 2021-22 school year.
   
   f. 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 (per CDPH guidelines) can be used instead of a face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.

2. **Physical distancing**

   a. Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. This is consistent with CDC K-12 School Guidance.

3. **Ventilation recommendations:**

   a. For indoor spaces, ventilation should be optimized, which can be done by following CDPH Guidance on Ventilation of Indoor Environments and Ventilation and Filtration to Reduce Long-Range Airborne Transmission of COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Infections: Considerations for Reopened Schools.

4. **Recommendations for staying home when sick and getting tested:**

   a. Follow the strategy for Staying Home when Sick and Getting Tested from the CDC.
   
   b. Getting tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are consistent with COVID-19 will help with rapid contact tracing and prevent possible spread at schools.
   
   c. Advise staff members and students with symptoms of COVID-19 infection not to return for in-person instruction until they have met CDPH criteria to return to school for those with symptoms:
i. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and
ii. Other symptoms have improved; and
iii. 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.

5. Screening testing recommendations:

a. CDPH has a robust State- and Federally-funded school testing program and subject matter experts available to support school decision making, including free testing resources to support screening testing programs (software, test kits, shipping, testing, etc.).

i. Resources for schools interested in testing include: California’s Testing Task Force K-12 Schools Testing Program and K-12 school-based COVID-19 testing strategies; The Safe Schools for All state technical assistance (TA) portal; and the CDC K-12 School Guidance screening testing considerations (in Section 1.4 and Appendix 2) that are specific to the school setting.

6. Case reporting, contact tracing and investigation

a. Per AB 86 (2021) and California Code Title 17, section 2500, schools are required to report COVID-19 cases to the local public health department.

b. Schools or LEAs should have a COVID-19 liaison to assist the local health department with contact tracing and investigation.

7. Quarantine recommendations for vaccinated close contacts

a. For those who are vaccinated, follow the CDPH Fully Vaccinated People Guidance regarding quarantine.

8. Quarantine recommendations for unvaccinated students for exposures when both parties were wearing a mask, as required in K-12 indoor settings. These are adapted from the CDC K-12 guidance and CDC definition of a close contact.

a. When both parties were wearing a mask in the indoor classroom setting, unvaccinated students who are close contacts (more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 0-6 feet indoors) may undergo a modified 10-day quarantine as follows. They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:

i. Are asymptomatic;
ii. Continue to appropriately mask, as required;
iii. Undergo at least twice weekly testing during the 10-day quarantine; and
iv. Continue to quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting.

9. Quarantine recommendations for: unvaccinated close contacts who were not wearing masks or for whom the infected individual was not wearing a mask during the indoor exposure; or unvaccinated students as described in #8 above.

a. For these contacts, those who remain asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue self-quarantine under the following conditions:
i. Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR
ii. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from
the date of last exposure and tests negative.

b. To discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close
contacts must:
   
i. Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known
   exposure; AND
   ii. Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wearing a mask
   when around others, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known
   exposure.

c. If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get
   tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care.

10. Isolation recommendations
   
a. For both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons, follow the CDPH Isolation Guidance for those diagnosed
   with COVID-19.

11. Hand hygiene recommendations
   
a. Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering
   coughs and sneezes among students and staff.

b. Promote hand washing throughout the day, especially before and after eating, after using the toilet, and
   after handling garbage, or removing gloves.

c. Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, no-touch
   trashcans, face coverings, and hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children
   who can safely use hand sanitizer.

12. Cleaning recommendations
   
a. In general, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential virus 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.

b. For more information on cleaning a facility regularly, when to clean more frequently or disinfect, cleaning
   a facility when someone is sick, safe storage of cleaning and disinfecting products, and considerations for
   protecting workers who clean facilities, see Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility.

c. 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.

13. Food service recommendations
   
a. 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 feasible.

b. Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed,
   and sanitized before and after meals.
c. 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.

14. Vaccination verification considerations

a. To inform implementation of prevention strategies that vary by vaccination status (testing, contact tracing efforts, and quarantine and isolation practices), refer to the CDC vaccine verification recommendations.

15. COVID-19 Safety Planning Transparency Recommendations

a. In order to build trust in the school community and support successful return to school, it is a best practice to provide transparency to the school community regarding the school’s safety plans. It is recommended that at a minimum all local educational agencies (LEAs) post a safety plan, communicating the safety measures in place for 2021-22, on the LEA’s website and at schools, and disseminate to families in advance of the start of the school year.

Note: With the approval of the federal American Rescue Plan, each local educational agency receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds is required to adopt a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan and review it at least every six months for possible revisions. The plan must describe how the local educational agency will maintain the health and safety of students, educators and other staff. Reference the Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER III) Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Local Educational Agency Plan Template.

Additional considerations or other populations

1. Disabilities or other health care needs recommendations

a. When implementing this guidance, schools should carefully consider how to address the legal requirements related to provision of a free appropriate public education and requirements to reasonably accommodate disabilities, which continue to apply.

b. Refer to the CDC K-12 guidance section on “Disabilities or other health care needs” for additional recommendations.

2. Visitor recommendations

a. Schools should review their rules for visitors and family engagement activities.

b. Schools should limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas where there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission.

c. Schools should not limit access for direct service providers, but can ensure compliance with school visitor polices.

d. Schools should continue to emphasize the importance of staying home when sick. Anyone, including visitors, who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as flu or COVID-19, should stay home and seek testing and care.

3. Boarding schools may operate residential components under the following guidance:

a. COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for all eligible people in California, including teachers, staff, students, and adults sharing homes with these members of our K-12 communities. See CDC recommendations about how to promote vaccine access and uptake for schools. Additional California-specific vaccine access information is available on the Safe Schools Hub.
b. Strongly recommend policies and practices to ensure that all eligible students, faculty and staff have ample opportunity to become fully vaccinated.

c. Strongly recommend that unvaccinated students and staff be offered regular COVID-19 screening testing.

d. Consider students living in multi-student rooms as a “household cohort.” Household cohort members, regardless of vaccination status, do not need to wear masks or physically distance when they are together without non-household cohort members nearby. If different “household cohorts” are using shared indoor when together during the day or night, continue to monitor and enforce mask use, and healthy hygiene behaviors for everyone.

The non-residential components of boarding schools (e.g., in-person instruction for day students) are governed by the guidelines as other K-12 schools, as noted in this document.

4. Additional information about how this guidance applies to other supervised settings for K-12 school-aged children and youth (including activities such as band, drama) is forthcoming. Childcare settings and providers remain subject to separate guidance.
July 28, 2021

TO: All Californians

SUBJECT: Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings

⚠ Note: This guidance is effective July 28, 2021 and supersedes all prior face coverings guidance.

Related Materials: Face Coverings Q&A | Face Mask Tips and Resources | Face Shields Q&A (PDF) | Safe Schools for All Hub | More Home & Community Guidance | All Guidance | More Languages

Updates as of July 28, 2021:

- Adds recommendation for universal masking indoors statewide
- Adds Adult and Senior Care Facilities to settings where all individuals must wear masks indoors
- References new requirements for unvaccinated workers in the State Health Officer July 26 Order

Guidance For the Use of Masks

Background

The COVID-19 vaccines are effective in preventing serious disease. Unvaccinated persons are more likely to get infected and spread the virus which is transmitted through the air and concentrates indoors. About 15% of our population remains without the option for vaccination (children under 12 years old are not yet eligible) and risk for COVID-19 exposure and infection will remain until we reach full community immunity.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide information about higher risk settings where masks are required or recommended to prevent transmission to persons with higher risk of infection (e.g., unvaccinated or immunocompromised persons), to persons with prolonged, cumulative exposures (e.g., workers), or to persons whose vaccination status is unknown. When people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask correctly, they protect others as well as themselves. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors.
With the emergence of the more contagious Delta variant in California which now accounts for over 80% of cases sequenced, cases and hospitalizations of COVID-19 are rising throughout the state, especially amongst those that remain unvaccinated.

Despite ongoing outreach and improving COVID-19 vaccine access, as of July 27, 2021, a significant proportion of Californians throughout the state are not yet fully vaccinated. The Delta variant is two times as contagious than early COVID-19 variants, leading to increasing infections.

In California, unvaccinated persons continue to be required to wear masks in all indoor public settings. This guidance is an update, in light of review of the most recent CDC recommendations. To achieve universal masking in indoor public settings, we are recommending that fully vaccinated people also mask in indoor public settings across California. This adds an extra precautionary measure for all to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, especially in communities currently seeing the highest transmission rates. Local health jurisdictions may be more restrictive than this guidance.

In California, fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask in indoor non-public settings, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19, or if they have someone in their household who is immunocompromised, at increased risk of severe disease, not fully vaccinated, or not yet eligible for vaccination.

In workplaces, employers are subject to the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) or in some workplaces the Cal/OSHA Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (ATD) Standard and should consult those regulations for additional applicable requirements.

**Masking Requirements**

Masks are required for all individuals in the following indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status:

- On public transit[1] (examples: airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, and ride-shares) and in transportation hubs (examples: airport, bus terminal, marina, train station, seaport or other port, subway station, or any other area that provides transportation)
- Indoors in K-12 schools[2], childcare[3]

Masks are required for all individuals, in the following indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status (and surgical masks are recommended):

- State and local correctional facilities and detention centers[7]
- Homeless shelters[8]
- Long Term Care Settings[9] & Adult and Senior Care Facilities[10]

Additionally, masks are required* for unvaccinated individuals in indoor public settings and businesses (examples: retail, restaurants, theaters, family entertainment centers, meetings, state and local government offices serving the public).

See State Health Officer Order, issued on July 26, 2021, for a full list of high-risk congregate and other healthcare settings where surgical masks are required for unvaccinated workers, and recommendations for respirator use for unvaccinated workers in healthcare and long-term care facilities in situations or settings not covered by Cal OSHA ETS or ATD.
For additional information on types of masks, the most effective masks, and ensuring a well-fitted mask, individuals should refer to CDPH Get the Most out of Masking and see CDPH Masking Guidance Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

*Guidance for Businesses, Venue Operators or Hosts*

In settings where masks are required only for unvaccinated individuals, businesses, venue operators or hosts may choose to:

- Provide information to all patrons, guests and attendees regarding vaccination requirements and allow vaccinated individuals to self-attest that they are in compliance prior to entry.
- Implement vaccine verification to determine whether individuals are required to wear a mask.
- Require all patrons to wear masks.

No person can be prevented from wearing a mask as a condition of participation in an activity or entry into a business.

**Exemptions to masks requirements**

The following **individuals** are exempt from wearing masks at all times:

- Persons younger than two years old. Very young children must not wear a mask because of the risk of suffocation.

- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a mask could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance.

- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

- Persons for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

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[1] CDC Requirement for Face Masks on Public Transportation Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs

[2] Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People

[3] CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs during COVID-19


[5] CDC Interim Guidance to Reduce the Risk of Introducing and Transmitting SARS COV-2 in Cooling Centers

[6] Healthcare settings includes all settings in Categories A and C of State Health Officer Order, including Residential Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Facilities, issued on July 26, 2021

- See: CDC Updated Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination


[9] Refer to State Health Officer Order, issued on July 26, 2021 for definition

[10] CDC Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes

California Department of Public Health
PO Box, 957377, MS 0500, Sacramento, CA 95899-7377
Department Website (cdph.ca.gov)
State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health

July 29, 2021

TO: All Californians

SUBJECT: Vaccine Record Guidelines & Standards

Related Materials: My Vaccine Record | More Employees & Workplaces Guidance | All Guidance

Updated on July 29, 2021:

• To incorporate additional option for providing proof of vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at protecting people from getting sick. The more individuals get vaccinated, the closer we get to progressing beyond this pandemic. And the more people are vaccinated in any given setting, the safer that setting becomes. In certain settings, people in California may be required to provide a COVID-19 vaccination record. Refer to the State Public Health Officer Order of July 26, 2021, for more information about the specific requirements for healthcare and other congregate settings.

For current definition of “Fully Vaccinated” individuals, refer to COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People (ca.gov)

**Purpose of this Document:**

1. To identify various options for individuals to provide proof of vaccination

2. To provide instructions to individuals on where to obtain records of their vaccination

3. To provide points for consideration to help business owners and operators who may want to verify vaccine status of individuals to do so responsibly

4. To provide standards for organizations issuing different types of vaccine records

**Options for Providing Proof of Vaccination:**

• Covid-19 Vaccination Record Card (issued by the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control & Prevention or WHO Yellow Card) which includes name of person vaccinated, type of vaccine provided and date last dose administered); OR

• A photo of a vaccination card as a separate document; OR

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Vaccine-Record-Guidelines-Standards.aspx
Vaccine Record Guidelines & Standards

- A photo of the client's vaccine card stored on a phone or electronic device; OR
- Documentation of vaccination from a healthcare provider; OR
- Digital record that includes a QR code that when scanned by a SMART Health Card reader displays to the reader client name, date of birth, vaccine dates and vaccine type. The QR code must also confirm the vaccine record as an official record of the state of California; OR
- Documentation of vaccination from other contracted employers who follow these vaccination records guidelines and standards.

Where to Obtain Copies of Vaccination Records:

- All individuals who are vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine should receive a paper DHHS CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card.
- For all vaccinations administered in California via State distributed vaccine and for vaccines administered as part of the federal pharmacies, dialysis center, and federally qualified health center programs, vaccine administration data is entered into California’s Immunization Information System (also known as CA Immunization Registry2 or CAIR2). A copy of this record may be requested via phone, email, or an online form.
- People vaccinated through a healthcare provider can also request copies of their records from the healthcare provider.
- Individuals who received their vaccine at a federal facility (Department of Defense, Indian Health Services, or Veterans Affairs) will need to request a vaccine record from those facilities directly; the information is not submitted to or documented in CAIR2.

Guidelines for Implementing a Vaccine Verification Process:

When seeking confirmation of Covid-19 vaccination status, organizations may manually review a paper or digital copy of individual's Covid-19 Vaccine Record Card or use a SMART Health Card-compatible reader to confirm the information contained in the digital vaccine record, with the individual’s consent.

As part of that process, California recommends that organizations adhere to the following standards and principles for COVID-19 vaccine verification:

- Records should be verified through a private and confidential process.
- Verification should not create or perpetuate social or health inequities or lead to discrimination.
- Verification should not create barriers to essential services or restrict access based on a protected characteristic.
- Workers who are not fully vaccinated, or for whom vaccine status is unknown or documentation is not provided, should be considered unvaccinated.

Guidelines for Issuers of Covid-19 Vaccination Records:

- COVID-19 vaccination records should be available at no cost and available in multiple languages.
- Digital (QR code), digital file, and/or paper copies of a COVID-19 vaccine record should be available upon request.

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Vaccine-Record-Guidelines-Standards.aspx
• Minimum personal information should be required for individuals to access their COVID-19 vaccine record to protect privacy.

• Entities that produce a digital COVID-19 vaccine record should follow guidelines and standards from the SMART Health Card Framework described by the Verifiable Clinical Information (VCI) charter at https://vci.org/about.

Originally Published on June 14, 2021

California Department of Public Health
PO Box, 997377, MS 0500, Sacramento, CA 95899-7377
Department Website (cdph.ca.gov)
State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health

August 2, 2021

TO: All Californians

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year


**Updates as of August 2, 2021:**

- Reflect updated universal indoor masking recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC
- Clarify modified quarantine recommendations
- Refer to CDPH vaccine verification recommendations

On July 9, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published its updated recommendations for K-12 schools. The following guidance applies CDC’s recommendations to the California context, in order to help K-12 schools formulate and implement plans for safe, successful, and full in-person instruction in the 2021-22 school year. This guidance is effective immediately and will be reviewed regularly by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

**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.** In California, the surest path to safe and full in-person instruction at the outset of the school year, as well as minimizing missed school days in an ongoing basis, is a strong emphasis on the following: vaccination for all eligible individuals to get COVID-19 rates down throughout the community; universal masking in schools, which enables no minimum physical distancing, allowing all students access to full in-person learning, and more targeted quarantine practices, keeping students in school; and access to a robust COVID-19 testing program as an available additional safety layer. Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are fully implemented. This is consistent with CDC K-12 School Guidance.

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/K-12-Guidance-2021-22-School-Year.aspx
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Finally, this approach takes into account a number of key considerations: current unknowns associated with variants and in particular the Delta Variant, which is more transmissible; operational barriers of tracking vaccination status in order to monitor and enforce mask wearing; and potential detrimental effects on students of differential mask policies. Detrimental effects of differential mask policies include: potential stigma, bullying, isolation of vaccinated OR unvaccinated students, depending on the culture and attitudes in the school or surrounding community.

CDPH will continue to assess conditions on an ongoing basis, and will determine no later than November 1, 2021, whether to update mask requirements or recommendations. Indicators, conditions, and science review will include vaccination coverage status, in consideration of whether vaccines are available for children under 12, community case and hospitalization rates, outbreaks, and ongoing vaccine effectiveness against circulating variants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 in alignment with the CDC-recommended indicators to guide K-12 school operations.

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As the CDC explained in its July 9, 2021 Guidance:

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/K-12-Guidance-2021-22-School-Year.aspx
"Schools will have a mixed population of both people who are fully vaccinated and people who are not fully vaccinated... These variations require K-12 administrators to make decisions about the use of COVID-19 prevention strategies in their schools to protect people who are not fully vaccinated... Together with local public health officials, school administrators should consider multiple factors when they make decisions about implementing layered prevention strategies against COVID-19."

In an effort to streamline and tailor this decision-making process for the California context, guidance regarding each of the measures that can be used in a layered prevention strategy is provided below.

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   b. K-12 students are required to mask indoors, with exemptions per CDPH face mask guidance. Adults in K-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.
   
   c. Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, 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.
   
   d. Schools must develop and implement local protocols to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions.
   
   e. Consistent with guidance from the 2020-21 school year, schools must develop and implement local protocols to enforce the mask requirements. Additionally, schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus because they will not wear a face covering. Note: Public schools should be aware of the requirements in AB 130 to offer independent study programs for the 2021-22 school year.
   
   f. 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 (per CDPH guidelines) can be used instead of a face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.

2. **Physical distancing**
   
   a. Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. This is consistent with CDC K-12 School Guidance.

3. **Ventilation recommendations:**
   
   a. For indoor spaces, ventilation should be optimized, which can be done by following CDPH Guidance on Ventilation of Indoor Environments and Ventilation and Filtration to Reduce Long-Range Airborne Transmission of COVID-19 and Other Respiratory Infections: Considerations for Reopened Schools.

4. **Recommendations for staying home when sick and getting tested:**
   
   a. Follow the strategy for Staying Home When Sick and Getting Tested from the CDC.

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/K-12-Guidance-2021-22-School-Year.aspx
b. Getting tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are consistent with COVID-19 will help with rapid contact tracing and prevent possible spread at schools.

c. Advise staff members and students with symptoms of COVID-19 infection not to return for in-person instruction until they have met CDPH criteria to return to school for those with symptoms:

i. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and

ii. Other symptoms have improved; and

iii. 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.

5. Screening testing recommendations:

a. CDPH has a robust State- and Federally-funded school testing program and subject matter experts available to support school decision making, including free testing resources to support screening testing programs (software, test kits, shipping, testing, etc.).

i. Resources for schools interested in testing include: California’s Testing Task Force K-12 Schools Testing Program, K-12 school-based COVID-19 testing strategies and Updated Testing Guidance; The Safe Schools for All state technical assistance (TA) portal; and the CDC K-12 School Guidance screening testing considerations (in Section 1.4 and Appendix 2) that are specific to the school setting.

6. Case reporting, contact tracing and investigation

a. Per AB 86 (2021) and California Code Title 17, section 2500, schools are required to report COVID-19 cases to the local public health department.

b. Schools or LEAs should have a COVID-19 liaison to assist the local health department with contact tracing and investigation.

7. Quarantine recommendations for vaccinated close contacts

a. For those who are vaccinated, follow the CDPH Fully Vaccinated People Guidance regarding quarantine.

8. Quarantine recommendations for unvaccinated students for exposures when both parties were wearing a mask, as required in K-12 indoor settings. These are adapted from the CDC K-12 guidance and CDC definition of a close contact.

a. When both parties were wearing a mask in any school setting in which students are supervised by school staff (including indoor or outdoor school settings and school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems), unvaccinated students who are close contacts (more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 0-6 feet indoors) may undergo a modified quarantine as follows. They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:
1. Are asymptomatic;
2. Continue to appropriately mask, as required;
3. Undergo at least twice weekly testing during the 10-day quarantine; and
4. Continue to quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting.

9. **Quarantine recommendations**

   For unvaccinated close contacts who were not wearing masks or for whom the infected individual was not wearing a mask during the indoor exposure; or unvaccinated students as described in #8 above.

   a. For these contacts, those who remain asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue self-quarantine under the following conditions:

      i. Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR
      ii. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.

   b. To discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close contacts must:

      i. Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND
      ii. Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wearing a mask when around others, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure.

   c. If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care.

10. **Isolation recommendations**

    a. For both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons, follow the CDPH Isolation Guidance for those diagnosed with COVID-19.

11. **Hand hygiene recommendations**

    a. Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one’s eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff.

    b. Promote hand washing throughout the day, especially before and after eating, after using the toilet, and after handling garbage, or removing gloves.

    c. Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, no-touch trashcans, face coverings, and hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer.

12. **Cleaning recommendations**

    a. In general, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential virus 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.
b. For more information on cleaning a facility regularly, when to clean more frequently or disinfect, cleaning a facility when someone is sick, safe storage of cleaning and disinfecting products, and considerations for protecting workers who clean facilities, see Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility.

c. 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.

13. **Food service recommendations**

a. 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 feasible.

b. Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals.

c. 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.

14. **Vaccination verification considerations**

a. To inform implementation of prevention strategies that vary by vaccination status (testing, contact tracing efforts, and quarantine and isolation practices), refer to the CDPH vaccine verification recommendations.

15. **COVID-19 Safety Planning Transparency Recommendations**

a. In order to build trust in the school community and support successful return to school, it is a best practice to provide transparency to the school community regarding the school’s safety plans. It is recommended that at a minimum all local educational agencies (LEAs) post a safety plan, communicating the safety measures in place for 2021-22, on the LEA’s website and at schools, and disseminate to families in advance of the start of the school year.

Note: With the approval of the federal American Rescue Plan, each local educational agency receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds is required to adopt a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan and review it at least every six months for possible revisions. The plan must describe how the local educational agency will maintain the health and safety of students, educators and other staff. Reference the Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER III) Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Local Educational Agency Plan Template.

**Additional considerations or other populations**

1. **Disabilities or other health care needs recommendations**

a. When implementing this guidance, schools should carefully consider how to address the legal requirements related to provision of a free appropriate public education and requirements to reasonably accommodate disabilities, which continue to apply.

b. Refer to the CDC K-12 guidance section on “Disabilities or other health care needs” for additional recommendations.

2. **Visitor recommendations**

   a. Schools should review their rules for visitors and family engagement activities.

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/K-12-Guidance-2021-22-School-Year.aspx
b. Schools should limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas where there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission.

c. Schools should not limit access for direct service providers, but can ensure compliance with school visitor policies.

d. Schools should continue to emphasize the importance of staying home when sick. Anyone, including visitors, who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as flu or COVID-19, should stay home and seek testing and care.

3. Boarding schools may operate residential components under the following guidance:

   a. COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for all eligible people in California, including teachers, staff, students, and adults sharing homes with these members of our K-12 communities. See CDC recommendations about how to promote vaccine access and uptake for schools. Additional California-specific vaccine access information is available on the Safe Schools Hub.

   b. Strongly recommend policies and practices to ensure that all eligible students, faculty and staff have ample opportunity to become fully vaccinated.

   c. Strongly recommend that unvaccinated students and staff be offered regular COVID-19 screening testing.

   d. Consider students living in multi-student rooms as a “household cohort.” Household cohort members, regardless of vaccination status, do not need to wear masks or physically distance when they are together without non-household cohort members nearby. If different “household cohorts” are using shared indoor when together during the day or night, continue to monitor and enforce mask use, and healthy hygiene behaviors for everyone.

   The non-residential components of boarding schools (e.g., in-person instruction for day students) are governed by the guidelines as other K-12 schools, as noted in this document.

4. Additional information about how this guidance applies to other supervised settings for K-12 school-aged children and youth (including activities such as band, drama) is forthcoming. Childcare settings and providers remain subject to separate guidance.
August 2, 2021

To: The schools and school district of Amador County

As the first day of school approaches, this letter is a formal reminder to all Amador County school administrators, staff, superintendents, board members and the district that California schools must comply with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) directives, CalOSHA Emergency Temporary Standards and state orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On July 12, 2021, the California Department of Public Health released [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California for the 2021-22 School Year](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/TAB/COVID19/COVID19K12SchoolsGuidance/COVID19K12SchoolsGuidance071221.pdf). This guidance prioritizes providing all students “access to safe and full in-person instruction.” The goal is to safely get students back in classrooms and keep them in class. To achieve this, there are universal masking requirements that enable schools to eliminate physical distancing for indoor school and school bus settings, and provisions for modified quarantine for masked students who are exposed to COVID-19 at school.

This CDPH Guidance is consistent with the CDC K-12 School Guidelines, which state that when physical distancing is not possible it is important to layer additional mitigation strategies like masking. Masking helps control both droplet and aerosol sources of infection. CDPH describes masks as one of the most effective and simplest safety mitigation methods available to prevent in-school transmission of COVID-19 and support full time in-person instruction. The CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) also both currently recommend universal masking in schools, regardless of vaccination status.

Amador County schools have flexibility in how they enforce the masking requirements, but they must develop protocols to enforce them. CDPH encourages schools to offer alternative educational opportunities for students if they are excluded from campus because they will not wear a mask. They also remind public schools to be aware of the requirements in AB 130 to offer independent study programs for the 2021-22 school year.

As schools return to full in-person learning, if the universal masking requirement at schools is not enforced, students will not be eligible for modified quarantine in the event of a school-related exposure. Modified quarantine allows for fewer missed days of school and supports in-person education.
To be eligible for modified quarantine, it must be confirmed by school staff that both the contagious person and the exposed person were wearing masks during the period of close contact. Modified quarantine allows for students who are close contacts to continue attending in-classroom instruction during the quarantine period, as long as they remain asymptomatic and are tested twice weekly during quarantine. They may participate in all required instructional components of the school day, except activities where a mask cannot be worn, such as while playing certain musical instruments. Modified quarantine does not apply to extracurricular activities, sports, nor any community settings outside of school. Close contacts may not participate in those other activities during modified quarantine.

Note: Fully vaccinated students exposed to COVID-19 may refrain from quarantine following a known exposure as long as they remain asymptomatic, per the CDPH Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People.

Please note that failure to comply with California Department of Public Health directives, executive orders and public health orders places students, staff and community members at increased risk for COVID-19 infection. Violation of these orders could jeopardize liability and workers compensation coverage by your risk insurance administrator, incur penalties from state oversight agencies, and potentially disrupt school funding.

Respectfully,

Rita H. Kerr, M.D.

Rita H. Kerr, M.D.
Amador County Health Officer
most effective measures for source control of both aerosols and droplets. Therefore, masks best promote both safety and in-person learning. Physical distancing is generally useful to reduce only droplet transmission, whereas masks are one of the least frequent transmission mechanisms. Physical distancing interferes with the transmission of COVID-19, but it is not a sufficient mitigation measure. The most effective and simplest safety mitigation is to prevent in-person transmission by using masks.

Disease Control (CDC) K-12 School Guidance.

Disease control requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are fully implemented. This is consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's updated guidance. The guidance is as follows: Full in-person learning is possible when all students are masked, and there is a low rate of COVID-19 transmission in the community. If the rate is high, then only masks are required. If the rate is low, then masks are recommended. If the rate is medium, then masks are optional. If the rate is very high, then masks are not recommended.

The worst path to take is to delay and full in-person instruction. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has updated guidance for K-12 schools for the 2021-2022 school year. The conditional principle of this guidance is that all students must have access to safe and full in-person instruction. On July 12, 2021, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) published an updated guidance for K-12 schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

2021-2022 School Year
For a Safe Return to School
Health and Safety Plan during COVID-19

271 Rex Avenue, Jackson, CA 95642 | WWW.amadorcoe.org
Prepares, Supports, Inspires
Amador County Unified School District
Settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.

b. K-12 students are required to mask indoors with limited exemptions per CDPH face mask guidance. Adults in K-12 school and on outdoor space to conduct class as much as possible to minimize the amount of time masks are required.

c. Masks are optional outdoors for all students and staff in K-12 school settings. Because of this, teachers are encouraged to

1. Masks

Safety Measures for California’s K-12 Schools

This guideline includes mandatory requirements, in addition to recommendations and resources to inform decision-making. Stronger and the potential emergence of viral variants.

School Operations.

CDPH will continue to assess conditions on an ongoing basis, and will determine no later than November 1, 2021, whether to update premit/modified strategies. Further promoting more instructional time for students.
The following enforcement process will apply:
For students who are not exempt from wearing a face covering per the CDPH Face Covering Guidance updated August 2, 2021

- Return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom
- Instead of a face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distancing from others, such masks must be used or as specified by the district
- CDPH guidelines can be used for face coverings
- If a person is not able to wear a face covering, a face shield may be used
- Communicating from campus because they will wear a face covering, including Independent Study
- Mask requirements apply to all students
- In limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for pedagogical or educational purposes, students who are excluded from campus
- Consistent with guidance from the 2020-21 school year, schools must develop and implement local protocols to enforce the face covering policy
- Schools must develop and implement local policies to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering.
- Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition must wear a non-re restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a crape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.
COVID-19 Student Mask Exemption Form

For all exemptions approved from the time they submit the form.

Parents must note the process can take up to 5 work days.

Supervision for Review

At school, a parent may appeal this decision to the
and informed their student will be required to wear a mask
administration for their student.

Admission (s) or records for the student and the school.

COVID-19 Student Mask Exemption Form will be provided.

Once the process has been completed, the approved

Drop (s) can be used by the student

Alternative (e) or covering (such as a face shield with a

covering), the Health Team will then determine if an

il the student is found to be exempt, form weighing a face

are being implemented

The student’s learning is impacted because they

The student has a communication disability

The student has a mental health condition

The student has a medical condition

The student is under the age of 2

Exemption exists if one of the following is met:

Exemption will be made by the principal in consultation with the

The student has a mental health condition.

Exemption form from the school district’s office

Parents will request the COVID-19 Student Mask

The mask exemption process will be as follows:

Until the request form process is fully approved and completed.
**OPTION A:**

For a Safe Return to School 2021-2022 School Year.

Mask Exemption Flow Chart Options - The Board of Trustees will choose one option to be placed in the Health and Safety Plan during COVID-19.
Although students can attend in-person learning, they must guarantee for all extra-curricular activities at school, including sports, and all activities within the community setting.

If there is an exposure in the classroom, as long as all students were wearing masks or a face shield with a drape, students remain asymptomatic, and test negative twice weekly. They may continue to attend in-person instruction.

NOTES FOR OPTION REVIEW:
IS THE STUDENT EXEMPT FROM WEARING A FACE COVERING?

EXEMPTION REQUESTED (FORM T OR Z)?

ALL STUDENTS 2 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE MUST WEAR A FACE COVERING.

THEM OR DOES THE STUDENT HAVE A 504 OR IEP AND IS INCAPABLE OF WEARING A FACE COVERING FOR THE FULL SCHOOL DAY.

Has the student provided a request for exemption OR is the student refusing to wear a face covering and will not wear one provided to

REJECTION TO WEAR FACE COVERING

GO TO EXEMPTION DECISION

ANALYSIS TO MAKE A DECISION

IS THE STUDENT ELIGIBLE.

CONVERSE 504/IEP

CAN ATTEND SCHOOL WITHOUT WEARING A FACE COVERING

NO

YES

EXEMPTED WITH DRAPE

ALTERNATIVE WEAR

YES

NO

WEAR

ALTERNATIVE WEAR

YES

WEAR

CONVERSE 504/IEP
Students and parents must screen for symptoms each morning prior to arriving on campus.

- Students with symptoms cannot attend school.
- Any student who is a close contact is pulled aside by the district (whether wearing a mask or not) can continue to quarantine for 10 days or until they are symptom-free.

Discipline can end after day 10 if COVID-19 test is completed after day 5 from the date of last exposure and results negative.

Discipline can end after day 10 if a COVID-19 test is completed after day 5 from the date of last exposure and results negative.

Any student who was a close contact with an individual who was also wearing a mask and has a positive COVID-19 test may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:

- Wear a mask and have a negative COVID-19 test.

The term "close contact" in this document means the following: within 6 ft cumulative minutes or more, in a 24-hour period.

Notes for option review:
5. Recommendations for Stay-at-Home When Sick and Getting Tested:

- Follow the strategy for staying home when sick and getting tested:
  - Get tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are consistent with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections. Considerations for Reopened Schools.
  - Environments and ventilation. Airborne transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections.

4. Ventilation Recommendations

- Adequate ventilation, and cleanliness per CDC guidelines.
- Nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea per CDC guidelines.
- School requirements. Signs of illness include fever or chills, 100.4° F or higher, 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.

3. Health Screening

- When other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. This is consistent with CDC K-12 School Guidance.
- Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements.
- Physical distancing:
  - 1. CDCPH Guidance on Ventilation of Indoor Spaces.

2. Physical distancing:
1. Undergo at least twice weekly testing during the 10-day quarantine and
   continue to appropriately mask as required.
2. Are symptomatic:

   They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:

   a. Have been exposed to a COVID-19 reservoir or if there is evidence of infection in close contacts.
   b. Are within 15 minutes of a COVID-19 reservoir or if there is evidence of infection in close contacts.

3. Follow all guidelines for quarantine and testing following a known exposure as long as they remain asymptomatic.

   b. Close contacts who are fully vaccinated can:

   i. Reenter from quarantine and testing following a known exposure as long as they remain asymptomatic.

   2. For the purposes of this guidance, people are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks or more after they have received the
   second dose of a 2-dose series (F. Moderna) or 2 weeks or more after they have received the
   Johnson and Johnson (J&J) vaccine.

4. Quarantine recommendations for vaccinated close contacts

   a. Per AB 586 (2021) and California Code Title 17, Section 2500, schools are required to report COVID-19 cases to the local
      health department.

   b. Each school should have a COVID-19 liaison to assist the local health department with contact tracing and investigation.

5. Screening testing recommendations:

   a. A robust testing program is one key strategy to allow schools to continue to remain open. Testing can modify quarantine as
      required and ensure that students can return to school.

6. Campus testing:

   a. High School and Argonaut High School are available for students and staff at all school sites.

   b. A COVID-19 testing site is available at Steve Liveoak Junior High School.

   c. Testing is allowed under the K-12 school guidelines and is also supported by minimizing missed school days.

7. Case Reporting, contact tracing and investigation:

   a. Fills are the same as for the 2021-2022 school year.

   b. Amador High School and Argonaut High School.

   c. The goal is to have testing available for students and staff at all school sites.

   d. The program is one key strategy to allow schools to continue to remain open?
11. Isolation Recommendations

a. Both vaccinated and unvaccinated people who test positive for COVID-19 should immediately self-isolate. In the event a

b. Those who are symptomatic may discontinue self-isolation only under the following conditions:

i. At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset; AND

ii. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; AND

iii. Other symptoms have improved;

iv. People with COVID-19 who are asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue isolation.

See Appendix A for how chart about when students and staff must quarantine.

11. Prevention Strategies

a. In addition to these guidelines, the following strategies are encouraged:

i. Wear masks at all times while indoors on school property, including while in the classroom.

ii. Wash hands frequently, or use hand sanitizer.

iii. Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick.

iv. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

v. Practice physical distancing as much as possible, especially in crowded indoor spaces.

vi. Stay home when you are sick.

vii. Get vaccinated.

viii. Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from others whenever possible.

ix. Seek medical attention if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

x. Follow the latest guidelines from health officials and school administrators.

11. Contingency Plan

In the event of a COVID-19 outbreak, the school district will implement a contingency plan that includes:

a. Closing the school.

b. Quarantining密切暴露者.

c. Contact tracing.


11. Reporting

All COVID-19 cases must be reported to the school district's health official.

11. Communication

All members of the school community are expected to communicate honestly and transparently about COVID-19.

11. Enforcement

In the event of non-compliance with these guidelines, disciplinary action may be taken.
12. Hand hygiene recommendations

b. Promote hand washing throughout the day, especially before and after eating, after using the toilet, and after handling garbage or removing gloves.

c. Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one’s eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or tissue, if available.

13. Cleaning recommendations

a. In general, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential viruses that may be on surfaces. Disinfecting using disinfector in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (COVID-19) removes any remaining germs on surfaces.

b. When further reduces any risk of spreading infection.

c. If a facility has had a sick person with COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, clean AND disinfect the occupied by that individual.

14. Food service recommendations

a. Maximize physical distance as much as possible while eating (especially indoors), using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria or other eating areas, and facilities can help facilitate distancing.

b. Arrange for eating outdoors as much as possible.

c. If a facility has had a sick person with COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, clean AND disinfect your facilities.

15. Additional recommendations

b. Clean frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals.

a. Food service recommendations

b. Arrange for eating outdoors as much as possible.

c. If a facility has had a sick person with COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, clean AND disinfect your facilities.

d. Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one’s eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or tissue, if available.

If they develop symptoms, then the strategies for discontinuing isolation for symptomatic persons (see above) should be used.

a. Hand hygiene recommendations

b. Promote hand washing throughout the day, especially before and after eating, after using the toilet, and after handling garbage or removing gloves.

c. Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one’s eyes, nose, and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or tissue, if available.

If they develop symptoms, then the strategies for discontinuing isolation for symptomatic persons (see above) should be used.
12. Responding to Students or Staff Exhibiting Symptoms at School:

- Immediately separate from other students/staff until picked up by parent/guardian.
- Students and sick staff must:
  - Wear a disposable mask.
  - Maintain more than 6 feet of distance from others, preferably in a separate room that is well ventilated.

13. Responding to COVID-19 Symptomatic Students:

- Bus driver should be especially cautious.
- Good ventilation with operable/cyclable open windows is recommended.
- All drivers must wear a mask while driving the bus unless exempt.

14. School Bus/Transportation:

- Single use items and packaged meals.
- Given very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects, there is no need to limit food service approaches.
Vaccination verification considerations

1. Vaccination verification considerations

See Appendix B for a flowchart of what to do if a student is sick.

6. Additional activities may be required as advised by Human Resources following County Health Department orders.

7. Additional activities may be required as advised by Human Resources following County Health Department orders.

8. Additional activities may be required as advised by Human Resources following County Health Department orders.

9. Additional activities may be required as advised by Human Resources following County Health Department orders.

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131 COVID-19 Safety Planning Transparency Recommendations

Standards:

1. Documentation of vaccination from all contracted employers who follow these vaccination records guidelines and
   official record of the state of California OR
   - Digital record that includes a QR code that when scanned by a SMART Health Card reader displays the reader's
   - A photo of the client's vaccination card stored on a phone or electronic device OR
   - A photo of a vaccination card in a separate document OR
   - A date on a dose administered OR

2. Option for providing proof of vaccination:
   - Covid-19 Vaccination Record Card issued by the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease

3. Asymptomatic:

   - Fully vaccinated students and staff do not need to quarantine in the event of an exposure, as long as they remain

4. Fully vaccinated employees who are not fully vaccinated, or who decline to verify vaccine status, are required to continue to wear

5. Employees who are not fully vaccinated, or who decline to verify vaccine status, are required to continue to wear

6. In order to build trust in the school community and support successful return to school, it is a best practice to provide

7. Transparency to the school community regarding the school's safety plans. It is recommended that at a minimum all local

8. Educational agencies (LEAS) post a safety plan. Communicating the safety measures in place for 2021-22 on the LEA's

web page and at schools.
All requirements for physical distancing and barriers have been removed, regardless of employee vaccination status (except in the event of a major workplace COVID-19 outbreak).

There are no face covering requirements outdoors regardless of vaccination status for adults and students (except in the event of a major workplace COVID-19 outbreak).

All indoor spaces indoors while students are present, regardless of vaccination status.

Any employees working directly in contact with students and while students are present, must continue to wear face coverings.

The following regulations adopted by Cal/OSHA on June 17, 2021 are specific to K-12 school settings, and were effective immediately:

**California/OSHA Regulations for K-12 School Settings**

1. **Visitor Recommendations**
   - Schools should limit access for direct service providers, but can ensure compliance with school visit policies.
   - Who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas where there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission.
   - Schools should limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people.
   - Schools should review their rules for visitors and family engagement activities.

2. **Additional Considerations or Other Populations**
   - Schools should review their policies on "disabilities or other health care needs" for additional recommendations.

3. Additional information about how this guidance applies to other supervised settings for K-12 school-aged children and youth.

   - Including activities such as band, drama, or physical education.

   - Healthcare settings and providers remain subject to separate guidance.

   - Symptoms of infectious diseases, such as flu or COVID-19, should stay home and seek testing and care.

   - Schools should continue to emphasize the importance of staying home when sick. Anyone, including visitors, who have

   - School should not limit access for direct service providers, but can ensure compliance with school visit policies.

   - Who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas where there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission.

   - School should limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people.

   - School should review their rules for visitors and family engagement activities.

   - Refer to the CDC K-12 guidance section on "disabilities or other health care needs" for additional recommendations.

   - When implementing this guidance, schools should carefully consider how to address the legal requirements related to

   - Provision of a free appropriate public education and requirements to reasonably accommodate disabilities, which continue

   - When implementing this guidance, schools should carefully consider how to address the legal requirements related to

   - Provision of a free appropriate public education and requirements to reasonably accommodate disabilities, which continue
additional air cleaning systems

Employers must evaluate ventilation systems to maximize outdoor air and increase filtration efficiency and evaluate the use of

Employers must implement physical distancing and barriers during a major outbreak (20 or more cases in an exposed group of

Mouth is essential for communication.

They have a medical condition, mental condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering.

They are under 2 years of age.

They are hearing impaired or actively communicating with a person who is hearing impaired where the ability to see the

All visits to any indoor district facility must wear face coverings while inside those facilities if they are not fully vaccinated.

Preventing serious illness or death. Here is information on the COVID-19 Vaccine and the benefits of the vaccine.

Employers must notify all employees of the benefits of the COVID-19 Vaccine, including that the vaccine has been effective at

Employers who are not fully vaccinated or who did not receive or notify vaccine status are required to continue to wear approved face


The definition of a sufficient face covering at work now includes only a medical, surgical, or two-layer fabric mask, or N-95

Employees must provide face coverings to any employee who requests one, regardless of vaccination status.

Employees must provide face coverings to all employees who are not working directly in contact with students

Employed the Human Resources Office if you did not receive the vaccination ventilation form to

and where no students are present. Can choose to not wear face coverings while indoors at work. An employee may be

Fully vaccinated or employees (2 weeks after your last COVID-19 vaccine) who are not working directly in contact with students
This plan will be updated throughout the 2021-2022 school year as needed. As the CDPH and/or Cal/OSHA guidance and regulations change, visit https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Revisions-FAQ.html for additional information on the revised Cal/OSHA regulations for the workplace.
WHAT TO DO IF A STUDENT IS SICK FLOW CHART

STUDENT PRESENTS WITH SYMPTOMS

High Risk (need 1): fever (100.4°F), difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell, new or worsening cough

Lower Risk (need 2): sore throat, congestion/runny nose, headache, body aches, nausea/vomiting/fatigue

Contact Program Administrator or Assigned School Nurse to Conduct Verbal, Visual, and Physical Assessment.

Verbal:
When did the symptoms start?
Any exposure to someone ill?
What are your signs and symptoms?

Visual:
Flushed cheeks, difficulty breathing, fatigue, extreme fussiness/tiredness, coughing

Physical:
> 100.4 degrees F
> 50% pulse rate

Visual Verbal AND/OR Physical Concerns Identified

No
Observe for 10 minutes
Improvement?

Yes
Return to Class
Call and Notify Parents

No
Isolate and Prepare to Send Home

Are symptoms severe? If so, Call 911

Follow-up with Student/Family, Notify Public Health for Suspected COVID-19 Case

Return to School Options

Test for COVID-19

If Positive:
1) Fever for at least 10 days from start of illness
2)历性或痛苦
3) New or worsening respiratory symptoms
4) Re-exposure to a case has been documented

If Negative:
1) Fever for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication
2) Symptoms have improved

Provide test result to school nurse or administrator.

Alternate Diagnosis from Healthcare Provider

1) Fever for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication
2) Symptoms have improved

Acceptable documentation to be provided to school nurse or administrator

Recommend that parent/guardian take student to healthcare provider until illness is over and symptoms are resolved.

Close Contacts Can Continue to Stay in School Pending Test Results

If Test Result is Positive
Quarantine close contacts and notify Public Health

If Test Result Takes 48 Hours to Receive
Quarantine close contacts and notify Public Health to determine next steps

If Child is Not Tested or Alternate Diagnosis is Not Available

Assume Student is COVID-19 Positive

1) Bộ� Ngày từ ngày khởi phát
2) Bắt đầu điều trị
3) Các triệu chứng đã cải thiện

Contact Public Health to determine next steps.

The COVID-19 outbreak is caused by a type of coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. It is spread through respiratory droplets when an infected person speaks, coughs, or sneezes. The virus is spread by direct contact with a person with symptoms, by aerosol (small droplets that remain suspended in the air), or by indirect contact with a contaminated surface. If you think you may have been exposed to the virus, contact your healthcare provider immediately. For more information, visit the CDC's website.
BEFORE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
AMADOR COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
COUNTY OF AMADOR, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO. ACUSD 21/22-002
DECLARING NEED FOR LOCAL CONTROL IN MASKING AND DEMAND FOR
GUIDANCE ON ENFORCEMENT AND NEED TO ALIGN SCHOOL GUIDANCE
WITH THE UNITED STATES CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND
PREVENTION, AND AUTHORIZING NECESSARY ACTIONS IN CONNECTION
THEREWITH

WHEREAS, the Amador County School District (the “District”), located in the County of Amador
(the “County”), consists of schools serving students in Ione, Plymouth, Sutter Creek, Jackson,
Pioneer, Pine Grove, Fiddletown, Volcanoe and other communities which exist to provide a high
quality educational environment for all students; and

WHEREAS, in Amador County, persons 0-17 years old account for zero total deaths due to
Covid-19, and only 9.4% of all COVID-19 cases; and

WHEREAS, the District has served our community for over 35 years and has made sound decisions
to protect the health of students and staff; and

WHEREAS, schools in the Amador County Unified School District opened to in-person learning
in October 2020 and have been fully open since March 2021 with no epidemiological evidence
of COVID-19 transmission occurring on campus; and

WHEREAS, the majority of adults and children over 12 years old - including those at high
risk of adverse outcomes from COVID-19 - have had ample opportunity to be vaccinated;

WHEREAS, differing levels of virus across the State require targeted strategies to mitigate
the spread of COVID-19 and require locally determined approaches;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved, determined and ordered by the Board of Trustees of the
Amador County Unified School District to support the following positions:

- Insist that the governing authority for school safety protocols be returned to locally
elected school trustee members;
- Recognize the significant number of requests for parental choice coupled with other
parents advocating for continued masking to maximize COVID-19 prevention;
- Advocate for Parental Choice for masking and vaccinating their children;
- Exert the need and advocate for further guidance from the State of California on how to
enforce the State’s masking requirement when the District can no longer suspend students
for willful defiance, nor can a student’s educational rights be taken away to remove them
unwillingly to independent study or on-line school;
- Publicly declare that CDPH and Elected State representatives changed guidance to schools
to avoid taking responsibility for the enforcement of such directives, removed the statues
used by districts to enforce such actions with students, and thus created confusion within the
public, school boards and educational leaders on how to implement said guidance;

-1-
• Recognize that the District is required to comply with California Department of Public Health guidance, to the extent that such guidance can be understood and successfully implemented.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Amador County Unified School District calls for alignment between the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) for masking and other health related guidance so that confusion and political divide do not enter into the COVID-19 debate;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees of the Amador County Unified School District Board of Trustees direct the Secretary of the Board of Trustees to transmit official copies of this resolution to the California Department of Public Health, California State and Federal elected officials, California Governor, and any other entities the board deems appropriate for this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be distributed to all schools.

Kandi Thompson
President, Board of Trustees

Deborah Pulskamp
Clerk, Board of Trustees
AGENDA ITEM #: 13.2

SUBJECT:
Board Policy Update – Discussion/Action

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
Multiple board policy updates are done each year. The policy presented for updating at this time is in the area of Educational Services. The description summarizes the changes made to the policy.

Board Policy 6158 – Independent Study
Policy updated to reflect NEW LAW (AB 130, 2021) which requires all districts, for the 2021-22 school year, to offer independent study to meet the educational needs of students unless a waiver is obtained and to adopt policy with specified components in order to generate apportionment for independent study. Policy updates the minimum period of time permitted for independent study to be three consecutive school days, requires an evaluation to determine if the student should continue in independent study if the student fails to make satisfactory educational progress, and requires that content be aligned to grade level standards including the requirement for high schools to offer access to all courses offered by the district for graduation and approved as creditable for A-G admission criteria. Policy also updated to include the requirement for live interaction and/or synchronous instruction based on grade level, tiered reengagement strategies for students not generating attendance for a specified period of time, expeditious transition for students whose families wish to return to in-person instruction, notice to parents/guardians of specified information, the provision of a student-parent-educator conference, upon request, prior to enrollment and/or disenrollment, and the keeping of additional records including documentation of each student’s participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction on each school day, as applicable. Policy updated to include material formerly in the AR regarding requirements for independent study and written agreements as well as new requirements regarding the same, including that written agreements must include a detailed statement of academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of particular students, that the agreement may be signed electronically as specified, and that, for the 2021-22 school year, the written agreement must be signed no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction. Policy updated to include material formerly in the AR regarding course-based independent study and to generally align the requirements of course-based independent study with the requirements for general independent study.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:
None

RECOMMENDATION:
The Superintendent recommends that the Board approve the Board Policy update.

PRESENTED BY:
Sean Snider, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services
INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Governing Board authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible students whose needs may be best met through study outside of the regular classroom setting. Independent study shall offer a means of individualizing the educational plan to serve students who desire a more challenging educational experience, whose health or other personal circumstances make classroom attendance difficult, who are unable to access course(s) due to scheduling problems, and/or who need to make up credits or fill gaps in their learning. As necessary to meet student needs, independent study may be offered on a full-time basis or on a part-time basis in conjunction with part- or full-time classroom study.

The Superintendent or designee may provide a variety of independent study opportunities, including, but not limited to, through a program or class within a comprehensive school, an alternative school or program of choice, a charter school, a home-based format, and an online course.

(cf. 0420.4 - Charter School Authorization)
(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)

A student's participation in independent study shall be voluntary. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5) Students participating in independent study shall have the right, at any time, to enter or return to the regular classroom mode of instruction. (Education Code 51747, 5 CCR 11700)

Independent study for each student shall be under the general supervision of a district employee who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code 44865 or an emergency credential pursuant to Education Code 44300. Students' independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and documented, as prescribed by law and reflected in the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 51747.5)

The minimum period of time for any independent study option shall be three five consecutive school days.

Written Agreements

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written master agreement and, as appropriate, a learning agreement for students participating in course-based independent study exist for each participating student as prescribed by law and the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5)

The master agreement shall specify the length of time in which each independent study assignment must be completed.

General Independent Study Requirements
For the 2021-22 school year, the district shall offer independent study, as specified in Education Code 51745, to meet the educational needs of students unless the district has obtained a waiver. (Education Code 51745)

Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study shall contact the Superintendent or designee.

For the 2022-23 school year and thereafter, the Superintendent or designee may continue to offer and approve independent study for an individual student only upon determining that the student is prepared to meet the district's requirements for independent study and is likely to succeed in independent study as well as or better than he/she the student would in the regular classroom setting.

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)
(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)
(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)
(cf. 6146.11 - Alternative Credits Toward Graduation)
(cf. 6172 - Gifted and Talented Student Program)
(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

Because excessive leniency in the duration of independent study assignments may result in a student falling behind his/her peers and increase the risk of dropping out of school, independent study assignments shall be completed no more than one week after assigned no more than one week for all grade levels and types of program. However, when necessary based on the specific circumstances of the student's approved program, the Superintendent or designee may allow for a longer period of time between the date an assignment is made and when it is due, up to the termination date of the agreement.

An evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study whenever the student fails to make satisfactory educational progress and/or misses three assignments. Satisfactory educational progress shall be determined based on all of the following indicators: (Education Code 51747)

1. The student’s achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the student’s performance on applicable student-level measures of student achievement and engagement specified in Education Code 52060

2. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the student is working on assignments

3. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher

4. Progress towards successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students participating in independent study are provided with content aligned to grade level standards at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high schools, this shall include access to all courses offered by the district for graduation and approved by the University of
California or the California State University as creditable under the A–G admissions criteria. (Education Code 51747)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students participating in independent study for 15 school days or more receive the following throughout the school year: (Education Code 51747)

1. For students in grades transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 3, opportunities for daily synchronous instruction

2. For students in grades 4-8, opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction

3. For students in grades 9-12, opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that procedures for tiered reengagement strategies are used for all students who are not generating attendance for more than three school days or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of their written agreement. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more. The procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747)

1. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled student

2. Notification to parents/guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation

3. A plan for outreach from the school to determine student needs, including connection with health and social services as necessary

4. A clear standard for requiring a student-parent-educator conference to review a student’s written agreement and reconsider the independent study program’s impact on the student’s achievement and well-being

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a plan to transition students whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, and, in no case later, than five instructional days. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more. (Education Code 51747)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written master agreement and, as appropriate, a learning agreement for students participating in course-based independent study, exists for each participating student as prescribed by law. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5)

The district shall provide written notice to the parents/guardians of all enrolled students of the option to enroll their child in in-person instruction or independent study during the 2021-22 school year. This notice shall be posted on the district’s web site, and shall include, at a minimum, information about the right to request a student-parent-educator conference before enrollment, student rights regarding procedures for enrolling, disenrolling, and reenrolling in
independent study, and the instructional time, including synchronous and asynchronous learning, that a student will have access to as part of independent study. (Education Code 51747)

Upon the request of the parent/guardian of a student, before making a decision about enrolling or disenrolling in independent study and entering into a written agreement to do so, the district shall conduct a telephone, videoconference, or in-person student-parent-educator conference or other meeting during which the student, parent/guardian, or their advocate may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the student in independent study. (Education Code 51747)

An evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in a student’s best interest to remain in independent study whenever the student misses three assignments, unless the student's written agreement specifies a lower or higher number of missed assignments based on the nature of the assignments, the total number of assignments, and/or other unique circumstances.

Master Agreement

For the 2021–22 school year only, the district shall obtain a signed written agreement for independent study no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.

A written agreement shall be developed and implemented for each student participating in independent study for five three or more consecutive school days. (Education Code 46300, 51747; 5 CCR 11703)

The agreement shall include general student data, including the student's name, address, grade level, birth date, school of enrollment, and program placement.

The independent study agreement for each participating student also shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11700, 11702)

1. The frequency, time, place and manner for submitting the student's assignments, reporting the student’s academic progress, and reporting communicating with a student’s parent/guardian regarding the student's his/her academic progress

2. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work and the methods used to evaluate that work

3. The specific resources that will be made available to the student, including materials and personnel, and access to Internet connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work

4. A statement of the Board's policy detailing the maximum length of time allowed between an assignment and its completion, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments, by grade level and type of program, which will trigger an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study
5. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in independent study under the agreement, with a maximum of one school year.

6. A statement of the number of course credits or, for the an elementary student grades, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the agreement, to be earned by the student upon completion.

7. A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of students who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas, such as English learners, students with disabilities with an individualized education program or a Section 504 plan in order to be consistent with their program or plan, students in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and students requiring mental health supports.

87. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate.

98. In the case of a suspended or expelled student who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Education Code 48915 or 48917, a statement that instruction may be provided through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

109. Before the commencement of independent study, the agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the student’s parent/guardian or caregiver if the student is under age 18 years, the certificated employee responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student.

However, for the 2021-22 school year, the district shall obtain a signed written agreement for independent study from the student, or the student’s parent/guardian if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil, no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.

Written agreements may be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the California Department of Education (CDE). (Education Code 51747)

The parent/guardian’s signature on the agreement shall constitute permission for the student to receive instruction through independent study.

Student-Parent-Educator Conferences Teacher Conferences
A student-parent-educator conference shall be held as appropriate including, but not limited
to, as a reengagement strategy and/or if requested by a parent/guardian prior to enrollment in
or disenrollment from independent study. (Education Code 51745.5, 51747, 51749.5)

Supervising teachers should establish an appropriate schedule for student-teacher conferences
in order to help identify students falling behind in their work or in danger of failing or dropping
out of school. Teachers are expected to monitor student progress and work closely with each
student to determine the amount and type of contact needed for the student to be successful in
the program.

Missing appointments with the supervising teacher without valid reasons may trigger an
evaluation to determine whether the student should remain in independent study.

Home-Based Independent Study

The Superintendent or designee shall encourage parents/guardians desiring to teach their
children at home to have their children participate in independent study. Such participation
allows continued contact and cooperation between the school system and the home-based
student and ensures that the student will be offered a standards-based education substantially
equivalent in quality and quantity to the district's classroom instruction.

Records for Audit Purposes

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that records are maintained for audit purposes.
These records shall include, but not be limited to: (Education Code 51748; 5 CCR 11703)

1. A copy of the Board policy, administrative regulation, and other procedures related to
independent study

2. A listing of the students, by grade level, program, and school, who have participated in
independent study, along with the units of the curriculum attempted and completed by
students in grades K-8 and the course credits attempted by and awarded to students in
grades 9-12 and adult education

3. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's work products
bearing the supervising teacher's notations indicating that the teacher
has
personally evaluated the work or
that he/she has personally reviewed the evaluations
made by another certificated teacher

4. As appropriate to the program in which the students are participating, a daily or hourly
attendance register that is separate from classroom attendance records, maintained on
a current basis as time values of student work products judged by a certificated teacher,
and reviewed by the supervising teacher if they are two different persons

5. Appropriate documentation of compliance with the teacher-student ratios required by
Education Code 51745.6 and 51749.5 (Education Code 51745.6 and 51749.5)

6. Appropriate documentation of compliance with the requirements pursuant to Education
Code 51747.5 to ensure the coordination, evaluation, and supervision of the
independent study of each student by a district employee who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code 44865 or an emergency credential pursuant to Education Code 44300 (Education Code 51747.5)

The district shall document each student’s participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day, as applicable, in whole or in part, for which independent study is provided. A student who does not participate in independent study on a school day shall be documented as nonparticipatory for that school day. (Education Code 51747.5)

The Superintendent or designee also shall maintain a written or computer-based record such as a grade book or summary document of student engagement, for each class, of all grades, assignments, and other evaluations issued to assessments for each student for independent study assignments. (Education Code 51747.5)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

The signed, dated agreement, any supplemental agreement, assignment records, work samples, and attendance records may be maintained on file electronically. (Education Code 51747)

Program Evaluation

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board the number of district students participating in independent study, the average daily attendance generated for apportionment purposes, student performance as measured by standard indicators and in comparison to students in classroom-based instruction, and the number and proportion of independent study students who graduate or successfully complete independent study. Based on the program evaluation, the Board and Superintendent shall determine areas for program improvement as needed.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)
(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)
(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)
(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)

Legal Reference: (see next page)
48340 Improvement of pupil attendance
48915 Expulsion: particular circumstances
48916.1 Educational program requirements for expelled students
48917 Suspension of expulsion order
49011 Student fees
51225.3 Requirements for high school graduation
51745-51749.6 Independent study programs
52060 Local control and accountability plan
52522 Adult education alternative instructional delivery
52523 Adult education as supplement to high school curriculum; criteria
56026 Individuals with exceptional needs
58500-58512 Alternative schools and programs of choice
FAMILY CODE
6550-6552 Authorization affidavits
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
11700-11703 Independent study
19819 State audit compliance
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
6301 Highly qualified teachers
6311 State plans
COURT DECISIONS
EDUCATION AUDIT APPEALS PANEL DECISIONS
Lucerne Valley Unified School District, Case No. 03-02 (2005)

Management Resources:
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS
Elements of Exemplary Independent Study
California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance, April 2021
EDUCATION AUDIT APPEALS PANEL PUBLICATIONS
Guide for Annual Audits of K-12 Local Education Agencies and State Compliance Reporting
WEB SITES
California Consortium for Independent Study: http://www.ccis.org
California Department of Education, Independent Study: http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/is
Education Audit Appeals Panel: http://www.eaap.ca.gov

Policy Reference UPDATE Service
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