

COVID-19 Prevention

Solana Beach School District

Governing Board Meeting

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Hard and Fast Rules

Schools **can exceed the minimum guidance** required by state guidance **as long as:**

- **Indoor masking** is enforced
- Full time, **in-person instruction** is available to all willing students as their regular mode of instruction
- **Independent study** as an alternative to in-person learning

Ca/OSHA Definition for Employees

“Face covering” means a surgical mask, a medical procedure mask, a respirator worn voluntarily, or a tightly woven fabric or non-woven material of at least two layers. A face covering should have no visible holes or openings and must cover the nose and mouth. A face covering does not include a scarf, ski mask, balaclava, bandana, turtleneck, collar, or single layer of fabric.

Masks Outdoor

- The state guidance **does not require** students or adults to wear **masks outdoors** at school. **Schools can** exceed the state guidance if they believe doing so is warranted
- The **chance of transmission outdoors** decreases significantly because **aerosols** that carry the virus are **dispersed quickly** in open air
- **Transmission is still possible outdoors** as we've seen many cases with high-contact outdoor sports

Ventilation

- **MERV 13** filtration with **outside air exchanges 5 times per hour** is very good
 - The filters will not remove all virus-containing aerosols but when your units are set up to draw in **100% outside air, almost all of the indoor air is exhausted, and fresh air is drawn in.** The filters are removing particles from the outdoor air that is being drawn in.
 - Setting the system to **begin circulating air 2 hours before and 2 hours after rooms are occupied** would add an additional layer of protection
- There are **no one-size-fits-all solutions** for improving ventilation. Each space is unique.
 - Adding portable **HEPA units** to classrooms **may not improve** the air quality in the **entire room.** The benefits may be limited to the air near the unit.
 - They may be a good fit near students who are **medically unable to wear a mask**, in **isolation rooms** near student with symptoms, and in **rooms with poor ventilation**
- Advice: Have an engineering **assessment** conducted to determine:
 - If all of the units that are currently in place are **working properly**
 - If there are **dead spots** where air is not been circulated
 - The best course of action **for each space**

Physical Distancing While Eating

- Children are typically animated when they sit together at a lunch table. **They're loud and playful.** Basically they do things that are likely to produce lots of **large particles and aerosols**, and their positions are **relatively stationary**. This increases the risk of transmission.
- Eating outdoors helps mitigate that risk but it doesn't eliminate it. Including distancing provides additional mitigation. **More distance = greater mitigation.**
- Using **assigned seating** and taking attendance on **seating charts** when children are eating would be useful for contact tracing if students are seated within 6 feet of each other.

Quarantine for School-Setting Exposures

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) based their recommendations on quarantine on findings from the CDC that showed that **transmission of COVID-19 has been less likely to occur on school campuses** than in other settings, **particularly when all children and adults wear masks indoors.**

Close Contact

California defines close contacts as being **within 6 feet** of a person with a **confirmed case** of COVID-19, for a total of **15 minutes** or more in a **24-hour** period.

The CDC recommends a different definition for schools, but we are required to adhere to guidance from the CDPH.

School Exposure: Early Return Options

- These options are recommended. None are required.
- Through Day 14, students **mask indoors** (masking outdoors is also encouraged), **monitor** for and report any symptoms, and practice good **hand hygiene** and **cough and sneeze etiquette**.
 - **Return on Day 11** (No test required)
 - **Return on Day 8** with evidence of a negative test administered on Day 6 or later
 - **Modified (in-school) Quarantine**: Remain in school with evidence of negative tests administered twice a week, at least 3 days apart.

Modified (In-School) Quarantine

To be eligible for this option, the student close contact and the person with COVID-19 **must both have been wearing masks during all of their contacts within 6 feet of each other, indoors and outside.**

- If one or both of the parties were **unmasked for any portion of the 15 minutes or more (close contact)** that they were within 6 feet of each other, **modified quarantine is not available.**
 - I have confirmed this answer with the CDPH on multiple occasions.
- Students must also **quarantine at home for everything except in-person instruction** (K-12 classes).
 - No before- or after-school activities through the end of Day 14.

Modified (In-School) Quarantine

- The CDPH created this option to provide **maximum access** to in-person learning
- The rationale is that **transmission is far less likely to occur when both parties are wearing masks** throughout the close contact exposure
- **Frequent testing** is used to identify asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic students who have COVID as early as possible.

Quarantine for Non-School Exposures

- The CDPH requires a **14-day quarantine** (Return on Day 15) for student close contacts who were **exposed anywhere other than a setting supervised by their school's employees**
- The options for **early return** are based on the **reduced risk of transmission in schools**
- Transmission is far more likely in **community settings** and in **households**
 - The **intensity and duration** of those exposures are typically **greater**

Reducing the Number of Students Required to Quarantine

There are no “free” or easy solutions. **Everything has a cost.** The challenge is **balancing the costs and benefits** of mitigation measures against the costs and benefits of having fewer restrictions

- **Regrouping students** in classrooms **based on their needs** allows a teacher to work with students based on their reading levels, while another combination of students may be needed for math. Regrouping **increases the number of potential close contacts.**
- Keeping students in **assigned seats in class and at lunch** **minimizes** the potential number of **close contacts** and makes **contact tracing more accurate** but it **restricts social interactions and makes school less fun.**

Reducing the Number of Students Required to Quarantine

Modified quarantine is available when both the infected person, and the close contact were wearing **masks at all times during the 15-minutes or more** that they were **within 6 feet** during the 24-hour period.

- Requiring physical **distancing at 6 feet** or more in all settings would **eliminate all close contacts**.
 - Imposing **3 feet** would **reduce the number** of close contacts.
- Requiring that all students wear **masks whenever physical distancing is not in place** would preserve the options of **modified quarantine**.