

May 18, 2021

Subject: Recent Announcements Regarding Mask Wearing and Social Distancing

Dear SDUHSD Community:

With the recent announcements from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) eliminating mask wearing mandates and social distancing for individuals who have been vaccinated, questions have arisen about what this means for our students and site teams. We recognize that understanding the District's position is particularly important so that our community knows what the expectations are for school attendance, graduation and end-of-the-year activities. A short answer to questions about the status of mask requirements and social distancing at our schools is that these protective measures will remain in place through the end of the academic year until further notice.

In an effort to provide some clarity about why these protective measures will remain in place for now, we are providing additional information below.

The CDC's Guidelines

The CDC provides guidance and recommendations for our nation as a whole. Last week, the CDC released guidance that fully vaccinated people do not need to wear face masks indoors or outdoors. On May 15 (Saturday), the CDC issued additional guidance relating to schools as part of its "[K-12 School Operational Strategy](#)" recommending that "**schools continue to use the current Covid-19 prevention strategies for the 2020-21 school year**" (which means that mask and social distancing requirements stay in place for the duration of this academic school year).

The CDC's recommendation for the continuation of these prevention strategies is based on numerous factors including the below:

- Dual-dose vaccines for youth between the ages of 12 and 15, which have the highest rate of protection, were not approved until May 12, 2021.
- Because people are not fully vaccinated until 2 weeks after their second dose, and there is a wait period of approximately a month before the 2nd dose can be administered, students in this age group will not be fully vaccinated before the end of current school year.
- The CDC guideline was also based on time needed for schools to make systems and policy adjustments. Systems and policy adjustments may be required for schools to change mask requirements for students and staff, while continuing to ensure the safety of unvaccinated populations.

Do states have to follow the CDC's guidelines?

The 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives states the discretion to make their own requirements to protect its residents' public health. So, the State of California has the authority to devise and adopt its own guidelines and requirements, which may differ from the CDC's guidelines.

State of California and the CDPH

School districts in California follow the recommendations of the California Department of Public Health ([CDPH](#)), subject to additional guidelines or requirements set forth at the County level. At this time, the CDPH's direction is that schools

have prevention strategies in place for the duration of this academic school year. Additional updates will follow after June 15.

What about graduations/promotions?

Please review your school site's information on graduation/promotion ceremonies. If there are any concerns about your school's graduation/promotion or end-of-the-year activities, please direct all questions to school site administration.

What about 2021-22 School Year

Guidelines and our community circumstances are ever-changing. However, we expect to reopen fully 5 days a week in the fall. Please reference the following [link](#) for more information.

We will continue to keep our community apprised of additional developments as they become available.

Sincerely,

Lucile Lynch, Interim Superintendent

Mark Miller, Deputy Superintendent

Bryan Marcus, Associate Superintendent • Education Services

Tina Douglas, Associate Superintendent, • Business Services

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