

STANISLAUS COUNTY
2020-2021

SCHOOL YEAR PLANNING:

A GUIDE TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19

INCLUDING A SPECIAL SECTION FOR FAMILIES/COMMUNITIES



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Other Resources for School Re-Opening:

[Stanislaus County Health Services Agency](#)

[Leveraging the Power of Social Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#)

[Good 2 Go Stanislaus \(SCHSA - Youth Sports p. 24\)](#)

[COVID-19 Health Services Recovery Plan Resource in Educational](#)

[Settings \(CA School Nurses Association\)](#)

[School Reopening Final Report \(ACSA\)](#)



A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENTS IN STANISLAUS COUNTY

The Stanislaus County Office of Education (SCOE), local school districts, Charter Schools, and Stanislaus County Public Health are fully committed to working together to prepare for the reopening of schools and convened a countywide committee to address this need.

As COVID-19 continues to change our collective landscape, our districts will work together to leverage resources, share best practices, and advocate for regulatory flexibility, including state and federal waivers to enable us to provide the best possible programs for all our students. This document is a guide for districts to consider as they plan for the next school year.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to reopening schools across our 25 districts. Based on available information as of June 5, 2020, school districts in Stanislaus County will create contingency plans for reopening schools based on the guiding principles, current planning considerations, and assumptions in this document. These plans are subject to change as public health guidelines are updated.

Our thanks to the school district staff members who helped develop these guidelines. Special thanks to our County Department of Health and especially to our Public Health Officer, Dr. Julie Vaishampayan, for her outstanding support.

Regards,

Scott Kuykendall, *Stanislaus County Office of Education*
Scott Siegel, *Ceres Unified School District*
Cherise Olvera, *Chatom Union School District*
Terry Metzger, *Denair Unified School District*
David Garcia, *Empire Union School District*
Wendy Williams, *Gratton School District*
Leah Silvestre, *Great Valley Academies*
Matthew Shipley, *Hart-Ransom Union School District*
Paul Gardner, *Hickman Community Charter District*
Brenda Smith, *Hughson Unified School District*
Helio Brasil, *Keyes Union School District*
Janet Skulina, *Knights Ferry School District*
Sara Noguchi, *Modesto City Schools District*
Randy Fillpot, *Newman-Crows Landing Unified School District*
Marc Malone, *Oakdale Joint Unified School District*
Heath Thomason, *Paradise Elementary School District*
Phil Alfano, *Patterson Joint Unified School District*
Christine Facella, *Riverbank Unified School District*
Bob Loretelli, *Roberts Ferry Union School District*
Twila Tosh, *Salida Union School District*
Seth Ehrler, *Shiloh School District*
Shannon Sanford, *Stanislaus Union School District*
Debra Hendricks, *Sylvan Union School District*
Dana Trevethan, *Turlock Unified School District*
Tom Price, *Valley Home Joint School District*
Don Davis, *Waterford Unified School District*

WHAT FAMILIES CAN EXPECT WHEN SCHOOLS REOPEN

The health and safety of our students, staff, and families is of utmost importance. When the 2020-2021 school year begins in Stanislaus County, on-campus school will look much different than previous years due to new health and safety measures. Each district will be developing plans to reopen schools based on guidance from public health officials and state agencies. District plans will be updated as the situation evolves.

It is important to note that district plans must focus sharply on academic instruction to enhance student performance and address learning loss. At the same time, districts will also try their best to maintain the extracurricular programs, clubs, and athletics that are so important to the physical, mental, and social well-being of our students.

On May 15, 2020, Governor Newsom shared California's May Budget Revision for 2020-2021. Schools have never faced this level of funding cuts. These significant funding cuts for schools will impact the reopening of school campuses that will be faced with increased costs to address safety measures connected to the pandemic.

WHEN SCHOOLS RESUME IN THE FALL, THEY WILL LOOK DIFFERENT.

HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT:

Schools plan to reopen in a traditional manner with thoughtful safeguards to minimize risk.

The following health and safety guidance has been recommended by the Stanislaus County Public Health for the reopening of schools based on current information and will be updated as the situation changes.

Screening at Home

- Families are recommended to take temperatures daily before going to school.
- Anyone with a *fever* of 100.4 F or higher should not go to a school site.
- Students and adults should also screen themselves for respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath prior to coming to school each day.
- Students and adults experiencing those symptoms should *not* attend school.



Transportation

- Staff may be wearing face coverings.
- Students are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings.
- Hand sanitizer may be available for students when getting on/off the bus.
- When possible, space students out on buses.
- Windows may be open for better ventilation.
- Siblings will be encouraged to sit together
- Physical distancing when getting on/off the bus will be required.

General Safety Precautions Throughout the Day



- Schools will follow disinfection guidelines developed by Stanislaus County Public Health for classrooms, workspaces, outdoor spaces, and playgrounds, etc.
- Classroom furniture may be arranged to minimize risk of exposure. All students and staff will be encouraged to wash/clean their hands regularly.
**Handwashing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer should be made available in classrooms.*
- Schools will limit sharing of supplies between students and disinfect between uses if sharing is unavoidable and highly encourage disinfecting.

Other Safety Considerations

- Face coverings should be worn by staff and students (particularly older students), as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.
- Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school.
- Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, with the exception of those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid, or food service.

ON CAMPUS AND IN THE CLASSROOM

Social distancing will help limit the spread of the virus. Schools will consider the following strategies to maintain smaller groups of students in shared spaces:



- Limit visitors on campus
- Keep students in smaller groups, 3 to 6 feet where possible
- Serve meals in small group settings
- Space desks further apart to minimize risk of exposure
- Serve individually plated or boxed meals
- Where possible, keep student cohorts from mixing



- Stagger lunches, recesses, and other transition times as needed
- Do not host large gatherings such as assemblies and dances
- When feasible, identify a sick room for students who are not feeling well to minimize contact with others until they are able to go home



Contingency Planning

Quality instruction and a commitment to equity for ALL students continue to be the linchpin to the success of educational programs. Each district will make decisions based on available resources, local needs, and state policy. In order to maintain social distancing, schools may use schedules that combine distance learning and on-campus instruction. Some examples may include smaller class sizes where students attend classes for a portion of the week and/or reduced hours per day to maintain social distancing requirements. Schedules may change throughout the year.

At some time, schools may be required by Stanislaus County Public Health to modify school schedules to limit the number of students on campus. Some examples of schedules may include:

1. Smaller Cohorts/Student Groups:

Classes can be divided into smaller cohorts/student groups (e.g. one group may come to school on Monday and Wednesday, the other on Tuesday and Thursday or any combination of two days per group. The fifth day could be flexible based on district/school site plans.)

3. Half-Day Schedule:

Offer double sessions where half the students attend class in the morning and the other half attend in the afternoon.

2. Block Schedule:

Secondary Schools: Implement a block schedule to reduce passing periods and possible points of contact in each classroom.

4. Stagger and Modify Schedule:

- Stagger start and end times within a day
- Modify recess schedules and lunch periods
- Stagger breakfast/lunch schedules or serve breakfast/lunch in classroom options

To address childcare needs, community partnerships will be explored to offer expanded learning programs (before school, after school, and summer programs) to support families, especially families with preschool and elementary students.

Schools will work with students and families to ensure equity and access to quality instruction.

Accommodations for students with disabilities, students with diverse learning needs, students who are medically vulnerable, and English learners will be made as needed.



ATTENDING TO THE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF OUR STUDENTS WILL BE A TOP PRIORITY AS THEY RETURN TO SCHOOL



District and school staffs are committed to supporting students' social emotional wellness and offering resources to ensure students transition back to school smoothly. Support may include social emotional learning, building relationships, community building activities, and increased access to mental health/wellness services. Families and schools will need to work together to check how students are feeling and assess their individual needs to provide the support our students need during these challenging times.

IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING, ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE STUDENTS TO CONGREGATE WILL BE LIMITED AND MODIFIED AS GUIDELINES CHANGE.

Social distancing is important to ensure the health and safety of our students and will impact how some courses will be taught and which sports and extracurricular activities students will be able to participate in safely.



Courses

To minimize the number of students interacting, social distancing may need to be maintained in certain classes and courses.

Some courses may need modifications on how the course will be taught if social distancing is not feasible or when there is an increased risk for spreading the virus. Some examples of this include courses like choir and band.

Schools will work with students and families to ensure accommodations are made and alternative options will be considered.

For middle and high schools, students and staff may be asked to wear face coverings when social distancing cannot be achieved in some classes.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities

As of June 5, 2020, the following health and safety guidance have been recommended by the Stanislaus County Public Health for the reopening of schools. (Section III: Stanislaus County Public Health Guidance, June 5, 2020)

If social distancing is feasible and modifications are made, the following are examples of sports that may be permitted:

- Sports Conditioning
- Swimming (one person per lane or every other lane)
- Diving
- Golf
- Tennis
- Cheerleading
- Cross Country
- Track and Field

The following sports involve close contact and are not recommended as of June 5, 2020.

As the school year approaches, further guidance will likely be forthcoming from California Department of Public Health (CDPH), California Department of Education (CDE), California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) and local authorities. As an example, the State CIF has a Sports Medicine Advisory Sub-Committee comprised of physicians, trainers, and administrators that is studying strategies to work with public health to restore athletics when it is safe to do so.

- Basketball
- Water Polo
- Wrestling
- Volleyball
- Football
- Soccer
- Baseball and Softball

Field trips are not currently recommended. Consider virtual field trips when possible. Assemblies, dances, and rallies are not recommended at this time.

The Stanislaus County Office of Education, Stanislaus County Public Health, and local school districts are committed to ensuring the health and safety of all students. Stanislaus County Public Health will continue closely monitoring the rate of infection in Stanislaus County. As public health guidelines change, the districts and schools will adapt and modify plans. We will work together with our students and families to keep our children safe as we transition to our new approach to educating students.

Family Resources

[SCOE Optional Learning Resources website](#)

[Social Emotional Learning](#)

[Art](#)

[District Specific Websites](#)

[Infants and Toddlers](#)

[Preschool](#)

[Specific Educational Content](#)

[Special Education](#)

[Technology Resources](#)

FAQ's

Stanislaus County Public Health Guidance



June 5, 2020

Plans will be modified as public health guidelines are updated.



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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June 5, 2020

Dear School Official,

Stanislaus County Public Health is appreciative of the partnership we have had with the Stanislaus County Office of Education and all the school districts in the county throughout this COVID-19 crisis. As you know, the decision to close our schools, as a result of the statewide stay-at-home order, was unprecedented, but borne out of our mutual desire to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and families. We understand the challenge that distance learning created for schools and families. The economic impacts of this crisis, along with new protocols for social distancing for disease prevention have created a tremendous amount of stress for families and our communities.

Public Health appreciates the important and central role that schools play in bringing a sense of normalcy back into our children's lives and we want to be able to do it as safely as possible. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Stanislaus County Office of Education as we re-think the changes to our collective landscape. We will continue to work together to leverage resources and share best practices to operationalize the guidelines for prevention of COVID-19 in the school environment. These guidelines may change as we learn more, and as we continue to find new strategies to prevent the spread of infection in our communities. Thank you for your patience.

Thank you for all your work to protect our children while providing excellent education and other essential services.

Julie Vaishampayan, MD, MPH
Public Health Officer
Stanislaus County

FAQ's:

STANISLAUS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

The guidance provided are in accordance with current health orders from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Stanislaus County Public Health (SCPH) as of June 5, 2020.

Districts will need to seek approval from SCPH to address unique circumstances. Responses will be modified by SCPH based on new guidance or directives from state agencies.

Health and Safety Protocols

What are the latest guidelines from Stanislaus County Public Health (SCPH)?

School site/campus procedures

Screening and Testing

Will students and adults entering campuses be screened for symptoms?

SCPH: Schools may implement screening measures for students and adults entering campus, however doing so would likely be challenging to implement, especially for larger schools. We do recommend asking families to take temperatures each morning prior to coming to school. Anyone with a fever of 100.4 or higher should not come to campus. Students and adults should also screen themselves for respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath prior to coming to school each day. Students and adults experiencing those symptoms should not attend school.

Is the protocol for testing children different from adults? How available will it be?

SCPH: The process for testing children is the same as it is in adults and making adjustments for size.

Personal Protective Equipment

Will students and adults wear face coverings?

SCPH: Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students (particularly older students), as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently. Incorporate opportunities for hand hygiene throughout the day. Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.

What supplies are needed (e.g., face coverings, thermometers, personal protective equipment) for each campus?

SCPH: If social distancing is unattainable and face coverings are needed, it is recommended that schools provide face coverings for students and staff who are unable to provide their own. Schools should have a temporal or other external thermometer to detect fever in students or staff who become ill after arriving at school. Hand-washing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer should be made available in classrooms and other areas where staff/students are likely to be present. Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, with the exception of those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid, or food service.

What supplies should be included in every classroom and general area (e.g., office, cafeteria, bathroom) for use by students and employees?

SCPH: All sinks should have soap. Handwashing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer should be available in classrooms and other commonly used areas. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students (particularly older students), as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.

Are gloves recommended for students and adults?

SCPH: Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, with the exception of those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid, or food service.

Social Distancing

What are the social distancing protocols (distance, number permitted in a group) in multiple settings: in classroom, hallways, common outdoor spaces?

SCPH: Depending on grade level, physical space, and class sizes, schools could consider the following strategies, where possible and appropriate:

- Keep students in smaller group, 3 to 6 feet apart
- Serve lunches in classrooms (smaller groups) instead of a cafeteria
- Stagger lunches, recesses, and other breaks to maintain smaller groups of students in shared spaces
- Individually plated or boxed lunches in lieu of cafeteria style

- Space desks further apart and orient desks so students are not facing each other
- Utilize larger classrooms for larger class sizes
- Keep student cohorts together and limit intermixing between different students
- Do not host larger gatherings such as assemblies, rallies, and dances
- Space students out on buses

What is the recommended number of students in a class based on student age and room size?

SCPH: The number of students per classroom will depend on room size and furniture configuration. Schools will likely need to assess their physical spaces and determine capacity accordingly.

Do schools need to close or limit access to common outdoor spaces?

SCPH: Common outdoor spaces may present less risk of transmission than indoor spaces, assuming students and adults maintain distancing. Schools may consider staggering recesses and/or outdoor time so that smaller groups are using shared spaces at one time. When using outdoor spaces, cohorts should be maintained whenever possible. Contact sports and activities that encourage close contact should be avoided.

What are the recommendations on how to configure the campus to include a space to isolate emergent cases? Possible campus configurations to designate an 'area' or safe place where students can wait to be picked up, if they are showing signs of COVID-19?

SCPH: When feasible, identify a "sick room" through which others do not regularly pass where symptomatic individuals can remain until they are able to go home.

Transportation

What safety measures will need to be in place for bus drivers and students?

SCPH: To lower the risk of exposure, districts may implement the following:

- Staff may be wearing face coverings.
- Students are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings.
- Hand sanitizer may be available for students when getting on/off the bus.
- When possible, space students out on buses.
- Windows may be open for better ventilation.
- Families will be encouraged to sit together
- Physical distancing when getting on/off the bus will be required.

Reopening and Course Offerings

What courses can be offered in person once schools reopen? What are the guidelines and recommendations for the following courses?

SCPH:

- Orchestra/Band/Music – No wind instruments or horn instruments. All other instruments including strings/percussion/piano are allowed with adequate physical distancing.
- Physical Education – YES, with social distancing
- Performing and Theater Arts – YES, with social distancing
- Science and labs – YES, with social distancing
- Choir – should be conducted virtually or not at all

Which sports and student activities can be offered in person? What are the guidelines and recommendations for the following activities?

SCPH: Based on the current situation, these are our recommendations. As the school year grows closer, the California Department of Public Health, California Department of Education, and/or California Interscholastic Federation may provide specific guidance on this issue.

- Swimming – Possibly, with modifications (one person per lane or every other lane)
- Sports Conditioning– YES, with distancing
- Water Polo – NO
- Diving – YES, with distancing
- Wrestling – NO
- Volleyball – NO
- Basketball – NO
- Golf - YES, with distancing
- Tennis – YES
- Football – NO
- Soccer – NO
- Cross Country – YES with distancing
- Track and Field – YES with distancing
- Baseball and Softball – NO
- Cheerleading – YES, with distancing

Reporting/Health Protocols/Communication

What is the protocol for handling students or staff exhibiting symptoms?

SCPH: Students or staff who are symptomatic should not come to school. If they begin exhibiting symptoms after arriving at school, separate the individual from others as much as possible and make arrangements for the individual to go home as soon as possible.

When feasible, identify a “sick room” through which others do not regularly pass where symptomatic individuals can remain until they are able to go home.

What are the expected reporting procedures

with Stanislaus County Public Health? What are the procedures for referring, tracing, and isolating students and staff with symptoms or diagnosis?

SCPH: The Stanislaus County Public Health (SCPH) Communicable Disease Program has procedures in place for investigating communicable disease cases, SCPH staff will conduct contact tracing using classroom rosters and information obtained from school personnel through interviews and in coordination with school officials.

What are the communication guidelines when a positive case is confirmed?

SCPH: Communication recommendations will vary depending on the specific circumstances of a case in a school community. At a minimum, the affected cohort will need to be notified. Media is handled in coordination between the school Public Information Officer and the Public Health Public Information Officer.

Will staff or students, diagnosed with COVID-19 need a document to return to school?

SCPH: Guidelines for determining when a COVID-19 infected person is able to return to school or work continues to evolve as we learn more about COVID-19. Stanislaus County Public Health will provide specific guidance on this as the new school year approaches. If needed, Public Health can provide a clearance letter for return to school.

If a parent is diagnosed with COVID-19 will their student need to self-isolate 14 days prior to returning to school? How will the schools know when the student is ok to return?

SCPH: If a student or staff has a household member that tests positive for COVID-19, the student will be required to quarantine at home for 14 days. If needed, Public Health will provide clearance

letters at the end of isolation/quarantine.

What is SCPH's recommendation for Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems in terms of identifying optimal working conditions to support health and safety?

SCPH: Districts and schools should work with their engineers to ensure that HVAC systems are functioning properly, maximize air exchanges per hour, maximize outdoor air, and are maintained according to manufacturer's recommendations.

Health Education

What are the recommended health education topics schools should provide?

SCPH: Schools should consider educating students on the importance of hygiene, understanding and monitoring for symptoms of illness, social distancing, and mental health/sources of support. Public Health will update the handbook that we send to the school nurses/administrators at the beginning of the school year to include information on COVID-19.

Will Stanislaus County Public Health assist with the development of health education training, guidelines and materials for students and families?

SCPH: Stanislaus County Public Health in collaboration with the Stanislaus County Office of Education will provide information on several health topics prior to the start of each school year. We will include information on COVID-19 this year and can provide additional information, as needed.

Facilities - Safety and Sanitation Considerations

What supplies should be included in every classroom and general area (e.g., office,

cafeteria, bathroom) for use by students and employees?

SCPH: All sinks should have soap. Handwashing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer should be made available in classrooms. Face coverings will be encouraged when social distancing is not possible.

How might the county office and districts coordinate the procurement of supplies across the county?

SCPH: As of June 5, 2020, the state procurement of supplies is still be discussed. However, schools should establish their own contracts for procurement for long term.

Where might physical barriers need to be installed at school sites and district offices to ensure student and employee safety?

SCPH: Schools may want to consider installing clear plexi-glass barriers at front counters where social distancing is not possible, similar to how many retailers have done so at check-out counters. Staff work stations should be arranged so that staff can socially distance.

What accommodations will be needed for students and employees that are vulnerable and/or at higher risk of contracting the virus? What safety measures will need to be in place for Special Education students, students who are medically fragile, and students who cannot wear masks?

SCPH: It is important to make sure that there are adequate accommodations for medically fragile students. If social distancing and hand hygiene are not possible, it may be advisable to consider providing these students with virtual classes.

What are the guidelines for cleaning and

sanitation- Classrooms? Office/work spaces? Outdoor equipment/playgrounds? Common outdoor spaces?

SCPH: Schools will follow disinfection guidelines developed by Stanislaus County Public Health for classrooms, workspaces, outdoor spaces, and playgrounds, etc.

Will extensive classroom cleaning need to be performed if a student or teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19? What are the guidelines for this?

SCPH: Yes. Districts will follow the established guidelines put forward by Stanislaus Public Health which are the same procedures that would be used after a norovirus outbreak.

Is the use of hand dryers in restrooms recommended?

SCPH: Stanislaus County Public Health does not have specific concerns about hand dryers at this time. If additional guidance is given, we will update our recommendations.

Other Considerations

SCPH:

- Limit sharing of supplies between students; disinfect between uses if sharing is unavoidable
- No field trips
- Limit events to those where social distancing can be maintained
- Limit/restrict visitors to campus
- Limitations/elimination of extra-curricular activities/sports
- Be prepared for the possibility of additional closures after campuses re-open if outbreaks occur
- Staff use of face shields when appropriate





“As pediatricians, our top priority is the health and safety of our children. We urge those in public health and education to work together to strike the right balance between preventing the spread of COVID-19 and providing children with the education, nutrition, physical activity, and mental health benefits provided through the reopening of schools. The risk of COVID-19 transmission among groups of children has not been well-studied, but current research suggests that the risk is much lower than the adult population. The negative effects of missing in-person educational time as children experience prolonged periods of isolation and lack of instruction, however, is clear.

Children rely on schools for multiple needs, including but not limited to education, nutrition, physical activity, socialization, and mental health. Special populations of students receive services for disabilities and other conditions that are virtually impossible to deliver online. Prolonging a meaningful return to in-person education would result in hundreds of thousands of children in Los Angeles County being at risk for worsening academic, developmental and health outcomes.”

~ Southern Chapters of the *American Academy of Pediatrics*, June 2, 2020
To read the full news release [click here](#).

