

COVID-19 Specific Safety Review Request for Schools

Background:

On January 14, 2021, the California Department of Public Health, in partnership with stakeholders, updated the [K-12 Schools Guidance](#) to support school communities as they decide when and how to implement safe in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. This document is rooted in the scientific evidence available to date and supports twin goals: safe and successful in-person instruction.

The goal of this safety review process is to consider the unique situations (described below) that, in light of the updated guidance, could either:

- Prevent the return of students to **safe** in-person instruction; or
- Lead to the return of students to distance learning who could otherwise be receiving in-person instruction in a **safe** environment.

The expectation is that in these situations there would be:

- Strong evidence (outlined in “Materials requested” section below) in the form of case data indicating that, for schools that are currently operating, COVID-19 in-school transmissions have been minimal or have not occurred; **and**
- High safety standards in place in all other aspects to ensure the safety of students and adults on the school campus; **and**
- A plan for ongoing safety monitoring.

CDPH anticipates that **local health officers** have been informed and **are in agreement with the request, as indicated by signing this form below.**

Definition: Schools and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs): As used throughout this document, refer to county offices of education or their equivalent, school districts, charter schools, and the governing authorities of private schools (including nonpublic nonsectarian schools).

Timing and Processing for Submission of Safety Review Request:

1. A Letter of Intent to Submit, accessible through the Schools Hub Technical Assistance portal, **must** be submitted and approved prior to submission of a full Safety Review Request. Letters of Intent should be submitted to K12SafetyReview@cdph.ca.gov. Responses regarding approval/denial of Letter of Intent will be sent no later than 24 hours after receipt.

Note: For schools/school district wishing to submit a Safety Review Request for situation #1 (outlined below), the Letter of Intent to Submit must be received by no later than February 17th, 2021 at 5pm PST.

2. For all Letters of Intent that are approved, a Safety Review Request Form and submission instructions will be sent to the Contact and email provided on the Letter of Intent.
3. This request may be submitted by any LEA operating in California. The submitter will have **ten business days** from the date the Safety Review Request form is emailed to submit the full Safety Review Request, including all necessary signatures, to K12SafetyReview@cdph.ca.gov.
4. The Safe Schools For All Team will have 7 business days from the date the Safety Review Request is submitted to approve, deny or request additional information.

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General Information:

Name of requesting School/School District:

County or Jurisdiction of Local Health Department:

Current COVID-19 Case Rate for the Jurisdiction:

Date of case rate:

Specific reason for Safety Review Request- select all that apply and provide requested information:

- ☐ (1) For LEAs that were currently open and providing in-person instruction as of January 14, 2021, where it has been determined that, after making good-faith efforts pursuant to the K-12 Schools Guidance to meet the minimum student-to-student physical distancing guidelines in the Guidance, that meeting that minimum would require students being served through in-person instruction on January 14, 2021 to be served through distance learning.

NOTE: LEAs submitting a Review Request for this reason must submit this letter of intent no later than February 17th, 2021 at 5pm PST. These LEAs may continue to provide in-person instruction using the same student-to-student distancing between chairs as was in place with Local Health Department approval as of January 14th, while they await a Review Request determination from the State Team.

If the request is being made by an LEA on behalf of multiple schools with different physical distancing measures in place in different schools, please provide an answer for each school, or for each group of schools with the same physical distancing measures. These answers can be provided in a separate document, in which case please respond "See Attached" in the fields below."

What are the student-to-student physical distancing measures as of January 14th; and how is physical distancing being measured (nose to nose, back of chair to back of chair, etc)?

Under the current physical distancing measures, what is the maximum number of students and staff in a classroom?

If only one school is submitting this review request: What percentage of students will be affected if, after making a good faith effort to meet the 6 feet recommendation per the K-12 Schools Guidance (p. 21), the school moves to a minimum 4-foot distancing rule?

For district application: What percentage of schools will be affected if, after making a good faith effort to meet the 6 feet recommendation per the K-12 Schools Guidance (p. 21), the district moves to a minimum 4-foot distancing rule?

Under the minimum 4 feet distancing rule, what is the estimated maximum number of students who would be in the classroom?

Please provide information on the high safety standards in all other aspects outlined in the K-12 Schools Guidance that are currently in place or that will be employed to compensate for the shorter distance and ensure the safety of the school staff and students.

Please provide a plan for ongoing safety monitoring and reporting to CDPH using an asymptomatic testing regimen while the school has in place physical distancing between students of less than 4 feet.

☐ (2) LEAs that, when the January 14th K-12 Schools Guidance was issued, were in the active process of bringing back additional students for in-person instruction as part of a phased-in reopening process consistent with being considered “open” under the July 17th schools guidance, but never offered all students in at least one grade the option to return for in-person instruction for at least part of the school week while the county was in the Red Tier or lower, and therefore do not meet the revised definition of “open” set forth in the K-12 Schools Guidance issued on January 14, 2021.

NOTE: LEAs submitting a Review Request for this reason must continue to comply with the January 14th K-12 Schools Guidance pending a determination on the Review Request from the State Team.

If the request is being made by an LEA on behalf of multiple schools with different phased in re-opening plans in place in different schools, please provide an answer for each school, or for each group of schools with the same phased-in re-opening plan. These answers can be provided in a separate document, in which case please respond "See Attached" in the fields below.

Number and percentage of students in each grade level that were receiving in-person instruction as of January 14, 2021:

What was the phased reopening plan, by grade level, that was paused on January 14, 2021, due to the issuance of the K-12 Guidance?

Please provide a plan for an asymptomatic testing regimen, with results reported to CDPH, while the LEA continues to offer in-person instruction and until the LEA has offered in-person instruction to at least one grade, including an additional 3 weeks of testing after the LEA has offered in-person instruction to at least one grade.

Materials required

1. The local educational agency's COVID-19 Safety Plan (see [Guidance](#) for description)
2. School-based contact tracing and case investigation data including the following (please work with the local health department as needed to obtain these data):
 - a. The beginning and ending dates for which the information is provided.
 - b. The criteria used by the local health department to conduct contact tracing and case investigation for school-based cases.
 - c. Criteria used by the local health department to ask close contacts to undergo testing after exposure (e.g., only if symptomatic, or within a set window of time after exposure).
 - d. The number of estimated cases across the schools being reviewed, during the reported time period, that were on a school campus during their infectious period.
 - e. The number of these estimated cases (from d.) that appear to have been associated with any on-site transmission, and how many in-school secondary cases occurred in association with the transmission.
 - f. Of the potential on-site transmissions, the number that were staff to staff transmission, student to student transmission, student to staff transmission, and staff to student transmission.
 - g. Any remediating actions taken by the school to prevent subsequent transmission.
 - h. The number of outbreaks (three or more cases that are epidemiologically linked) in the school community with in-school transmission, and any remediating actions taken by the school to prevent subsequent outbreaks.

And:

3. Data on any asymptomatic testing results for the schools or district during the period of data provided. **Note: We acknowledge that some schools may not have data readily available regarding asymptomatic testing or have not stood up an asymptomatic testing program. If that is the case, please write NA.**

If data is available, please include:

- a. The number of students and staff on site for in-person instruction during the data reporting period (provide dates);
- b. The number of total tests performed in the school or LEA community for those in "a" above (those on site for in-person instruction);
- c. Of these, the number of tests performed that were positive

District/County Superintendent, Charter School Administrator, or Head of School Attestation:

I _____ hereby attest that I am duly authorized to sign and act on behalf of _____. I certify that the information provided in the school safety review request is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date of attestation:

Local Health Officer Review:

Approved

Not approved

Signature:

Date:

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Safe Schools for All Team Determination

Approved ☐

Not approved ☐

Date of Determination:

Reason for rejection (for internal use only)

☐ inadequate evidence of prior safe operations

☐ inadequate asymptomatic testing plan for ongoing monitoring moving forward

☐ COVID-19 Safety plan without strong enhancements of other safety layers

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