Return to School
2021-2022

Updated
September, 2021
The Pacifica School District is committed to keeping students, teachers and staff safe and healthy as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. We welcomed back students to full in-person classes on August 18, 2021.

The District follows the guidance set forth in the San Mateo County Pandemic Recovery Framework, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the San Mateo County Health Department in order to stop the spread of COVID-19.

This guide will provide an overview of our measures to bring students back safely. As we returned to school in Spring 2021, we learned that we could operate schools safely and students and staff thrived during in-person instruction.

In-person instruction is the primary mode of instruction this school year with most students returning to school 5 days per week for the full day. For families that have medical concerns about returning to school, AB130 allows for Independent Study. We are providing that option to families through our Home School program. The temporary legislation allowing for distance learning for last school year has expired.

Pacifica School District and the schools will communicate primarily through School Messenger. Please make sure that we have your correct email address and phone number updated. We offer text messaging through School Messenger for urgent or emergency situations. You can sign up for text messages by following these directions. You must opt-in to receive the texts and it will only be used in an urgent situation or emergency. COVID-19 notifications for students will be sent by the office of John Bartfield, Director of Special Education and Student Services. Principals are providing information to the whole school regarding positive cases.

This Return to School plan describes how Pacifica School District intends to implement the health and safety protocols outlined by San Mateo County’s Pandemic Recovery Framework (PRF). The most recent PRF incorporates the latest guidance from CDC and CDPH and are linked below.

- [California Department of Public Health: 2021-22 School Guidance](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
Health and Hygiene Practices

Masks

Pacifica School District will continue to adhere to the most recent COVID guidelines issued by the San Mateo County Health Officer on August 2, 2021, for mask wearing. This guidance is currently more restrictive than the CDPH mask guidance issued in July 2021.

It is likely that the guidance regarding mask wearing will change from time to time. We will follow the guidance from San Mateo County and California Department of Public Health. CDPH will continue to assess conditions and determine whether to update its mask requirements by November 1, 2021.

These current guidelines indicate:

1) All students, staff and visitors are required to wear masks indoors at all District sites, with exemptions per CDPH face mask guidance.
2) Masks are optional outdoors for TK-8 settings and not required when eating or drinking.
3) It is recommended that people who are not fully vaccinated wear their masks in heavily congested areas outside (i.e., on the play structure).
4) Schools will provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to wear a mask to school.
5) 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.
6) In limited situations, where a face covering cannot be used for 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 in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others.
7) Students and staff will wear masks in district vans when being transported to and from school or as required on SamTrans busses.
8) If students are participating in a school event or being supervised by school staff, face mask guidance for K-12 settings must be followed regardless of location (i.e., Outdoor Education or field trips)
9) School staff will remind students about wearing masks and reinforce consistent mask wearing.
10) Should a student consistently refuse to wear a mask, and they do not have a documented exemption, we may provide instruction through our home study independent study program.

Handwashing and Sanitizing Hands

Staff and students will follow proper hand hygiene including hand washing and use of hand sanitizer. This includes handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, avoiding contact with one’s eyes, nose and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes, which will help to maintain a healthy school environment. Time will be provided for handwashing at these points:

- When arriving at school
- Before/after eating
- Before/after using any shared equipment
- Before/after using playground structures
- After using the restroom
- When coming in from outside

Hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms and common areas such as lunch areas, multipurpose rooms, front offices, etc. However, hand washing with soap and water should be used as a primary method of hygiene for all staff and students.

**Vaccinations**
Students ages 12+ are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. Resources and information regarding vaccination centers in our community may be viewed at [www.smchealth.org/COVID-19-vaccination-program-overview](http://www.smchealth.org/COVID-19-vaccination-program-overview). Currently, if a student is considered to be a close contact of an individual who tests positive for COVID-19, they will be asked to submit a copy of their vaccination record to the school office. We are planning to collect student COVID-19 vaccination records.

We are awaiting more information regarding vaccinations for children ages 5-11 in October or November.

In the Spring, over 95 percent of our staff were vaccinated. We are collecting the documentation of staff vaccinations. The vaccination status of staff is not made public. Please do not ask staff about their vaccination status.

**Staying Home When Sick and Get Tested**
Students and staff must stay home if they feel sick or if they are experiencing symptoms. This is a crucial preventative measure in maintaining health and safety for all at school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Symptoms of COVID-19 (CDPH)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Headache</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Fever or chills</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Cough</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Fatigue (tiredness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Muscle or body aches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ New loss of taste or smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Sore throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Congestion or runny nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Nausea or vomiting</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Diarrhea</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If symptoms are consistent with COVID-19, students and staff may not to return for in-person instruction until they have met CDPH criteria to return to school for those with symptoms, which consist of:
1. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **and**
2. Other symptoms have improved; **and**
3. They have a negative test for COVID-19 **OR** a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition **OR**
a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative named diagnosis OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

All students returning to school after an illness must return to the school office to provide documentation of the absence BEFORE returning to the classroom.

Physical Distancing
At this time, CDPH does not include recommendations concerning physical distancing in schools and reports that, “Recent evidence indicates that in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented.” Space should be used an additional layer of safety when it is possible.

Meals at School
While eating, maximize physical distance as much as possible. We will eat outdoors to the greatest extent possible.

Cleaning
Cleaning and disinfecting measures in classrooms and common areas will occur once every day. Additional deep cleaning and disinfecting will take place within 24 hours when a COVID exposure has occurred on campus. Additionally, staff will be provided with cleaner/disinfectant to use, when needed. Principals will work on alternate lunch plans and schedules for inclement weather.

Ventilation
HVAC units were inspected and adjusted in the Spring to provide maximum outdoor air coming into classrooms. MERV 13 filters are being replaced before the start of the school year and changed according to guidelines. Air purifiers are available for classroom use but should not replace open windows and doors.

Poor air quality days typically associated with wildfires and COVID-19 present a challenge to schools. For poor air quality, the response is to shut windows and doors and limit the amount of outside air coming into the classroom. For preventing the spread of COVID-19, we keep the windows and doors open to the greatest extent possible and bring as much outdoor air inside.

Pacifica School District administrations will monitor air quality. If needed, we will consider dismissing students from in-person instruction until air quality improves and proper ventilation on indoor classrooms/common areas can resume.

For resources and guidance on air quality, visit the San Mateo County Office of Education’s Air Quality Resources webpage.

Visitors
CDPH offers the following recommendations for visitors to campus:

- Schools will communicate guidelines for visitors and family engagement activities.
- 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.
- Schools should not limit access for direct service providers but can ensure compliance with school visitor policies.
• Anyone, including visitors and parents, who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as flu or COVID-19, should stay home and seek testing and care.

No volunteers will be allowed on campus for the first month of school. When we do open our schools to volunteers, they must provide documentation of vaccination or provide documentation of weekly COVID-19 testing.

**Gatherings**

Pacifica School District will consider all of the following when organizing meetings and events: limit the size of indoor gatherings, increase distance among participants, and/or adjust masking requirements. Even if events are outdoors and participants are vaccinated, we will limit large gatherings at this time. Some school and community events may be done virtually such as Back to School Night.

Site Principals will work closely with PTO Presidents and the Superintendent in determining which events will occur in-person at school and which events will take place virtually.

We are planning to transition our School Board meetings to in-person meetings in October. We are working on plans to allow the public to watch in a digital form and continue live public comment during the Board of Trustees meeting when the meetings are held in-person.
Know the Signs & Symptoms

When Students or Staff are Sick at School
When a student or staff member is sick on campus, school staff will escort the student to the school’s wellness room and provide a COVID-19 test, if available. If testing is unavailable, the student or staff member will be required to leave campus and seek a test from their healthcare provider or community testing site.

If a negative result is received, the student or staff member may return to school following the District’s health policies/guidelines in place.

If the student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they will be directed to contact their healthcare provider for follow up response and monitoring.

COVID Testing
Pacifica School District is committed to keeping students and staff safe. We are offering weekly pooled PCR testing through Concentric by Ginko. Any positive findings from the pool testing are followed by a rapid antigen test, typically after the pool testing results are received, which is approximately 2-3 days later.

The District will conduct contact tracing and rapid-response COVID-19 testing when a student or staff member has a confirmed positive case. Response testing using a rapid test will take place when there is a confirmed COVID-19 exposure.

We are currently in the process of implementing our own rapid response testing through BINAX. A second consent form will be required.

Case Reporting
It is absolutely essential that parents and staff report a confirmed positive case to the site principal or supervisor. It is also important to report if someone that lives with a student or staff member has a confirmed positive test for COVID-19.

When a school has a confirmed Case, the school site administrator will inform the PSD Superintendent and/or designee. Superintendent will communicate with the Office of the County Superintendent and the appropriate staff member will contact the San Mateo County Health Department. The school site administrator, in collaboration with other PSD staff, will take immediate measures to sanitize and disinfect the school property impacted by the case. If a case is on campus, while infectious, anyone on campus would be notified of potential exposure.

Pacifica School District has identified the Director of Human Resources as the district-level contact tracing lead for staff, who will communicate with each site-level principal to coordinate and verify contact tracing at each specific school site. The office of the Director of Special Education and Student Services will provide contact tracing for students and families. The District’s Administrative Assistant, Yolanda Pranza, communicates directly with San Mateo County Health.

Each site will maintain a detailed list of which employees enter/exit the school campus, and which rooms/facilities were visited. This will allow for effective tracing in the instance of a confirmed COVID-19 case. San Mateo County Health’s website provides additional information and scenarios
for responding to cases and close contacts in the school community (Procedure in Response to Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Cases and Close Contacts to Known COVID-19 Cases on page 23).
Response Testing and Quarantine

**Definitions**

**Fully vaccinated:** two weeks have passed since individual received their final dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

**Close Contact:** anyone who was within 0-6 feet indoors of a Case for more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

Testing and Quarantine of Vaccinated Close Contacts

Pacifica School District will follow the CDPH’s guidance for schools on response testing and quarantine, which include the following:

- Fully vaccinated individuals **should get tested 3-5 days after exposure.**
- If a fully vaccinated individual tests positive for COVID-19, they should follow CDPH and local health department guidance regarding isolation and/or exclusion from high-risk settings.
- Following a known exposure at work, fully vaccinated workers do not need to quarantine if asymptomatic.

Testing and Quarantine of Unvaccinated Close Contacts

When both parties were wearing a mask in an indoor or outdoor school setting or school bus, **students** who are unvaccinated and are close contacts, may undergo a modified 10-day quarantine and continue to attend school for in-person instruction, if they:

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

CDPH provides the following testing guidance for students in modified quarantine.

- Testing should begin immediately after being exposed to someone with COVID-19. Subsequent testing should occur at least 3 days apart.
- Quarantine can end after Day 7, if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure, and tests negative.

According to CDPH, students in modified quarantine:

- Are strongly encouraged to wear masks when outdoors.
- 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.
- May eat meals on campus using food service recommendations provided in this plan.
Please note, modified quarantine does not apply to teachers or other adults.

**Tests to Assess Status during Quarantine or to Exit Quarantine**

- The District will provide rapid tests in response to a confirmed positive case. Collection of diagnostic specimens for asymptomatic persons during quarantine may occur in schools, healthcare settings, or other locations supervised by school or healthcare personnel.
- For persons in quarantine who experience symptoms, a negative result from an antigen test or POC molecular test results should be confirmed with a laboratory-based PCR test.
- As of September 1st, CDPH guidelines allow that modified quarantine end after Day 7, if a negative diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure. The impact is that students on modified quarantine can return to extracurricular activities on day 8 instead of day 10.
- The District follows the direction of San Mateo County Health Officer.

If you have a question or concern, please reach out to your School Principal. Yolanda Pranza, Administrative Secretary is also available to answer questions. ([ypranza@pacificasd.org](mailto:ypranza@pacificasd.org) or 650-738-6664)

**Band**

Playing musical instruments that cannot be done with a face covering or if wearing a mask poses a choking hazard, at least one of the following is required:

- Conduct these activities outdoors
- Use modified face coverings and bell coverings when playing wind and brass instruments, and maintain 6 feet of physical distancing
- Perform at least weekly screening testing with either PCR testing of all individuals (by 9/27/21)

**Field Trips**

Outdoor Ed has established their [COVID Safety protocols](#) and will be shared with staff and families prior to attending.

Our field trip permission slip will be updated to include COVID safety measures.
Travel Recommendations and Requirements
Please see the table below for CDC recommendations and requirements concerning travel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic Travel</th>
<th>Not Vaccinated</th>
<th>Fully Vaccinated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get tested 1-3 days before travel</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get tested 3-5 days after travel and self-quarantine for 7 days. Self-quarantine for 10 days if you don’t get tested.</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-monitor for symptoms</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Travel</th>
<th>Not Vaccinated</th>
<th>Fully Vaccinated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get tested 1-3 days before traveling out of the US</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory test required before flying to US</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get tested 3-5 days after travel</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-quarantine after travel for 7 days with a negative test or 10 days without test</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
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<td>Self-monitor for symptoms</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are requiring students participating in international travel to quarantine before returning to school including providing a negative test. We highly recommend families follow guidelines for domestic travel.

Childcare
Before/after school care programs may be considered as part of the school setting for modified quarantine purposes if:

- They are located on the school site
- They follow the CDPH K-12 Public Health Guidance, most specifically, the indoor mask requirement is enforced
- They follow the State's public health order for schools to verify vaccination or test staff once per week
- Close contacts in such programs may qualify for modified quarantine
- Students who are in modified quarantine may continue to attend the City of Pacifica Child Care program.