

## Summary of Guidance for Reopening Schools

California Department of Public Health  
(CDPH)

[Industry Guidance for Schools](#)

Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC)

[Considerations for Schools;  
Reopening Decision Tree](#)

California Department of Education  
(CDE)

[Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the  
Safe Reopening of California's Public  
Schools](#)

## Key Recommendations

<p><b>Evaluating Local Conditions for Reopening</b></p>	<p>Districts urged to collaborate with local public health offices to consider the unique needs and circumstances of the local community. The CDC provided a <a href="#">“Reopening Decision Tree”</a> to ensure a school can (1) protect higher risk employees and students, (2) screen students/staff, and (3) implement the safety protocols in this document.</p> <p>The CDE provided a <a href="#">10-part checklist</a> to evaluate whether to reopen, emphasizing: “the final decision to reopen will be made by each LEA working in close collaboration with local health officials and community stakeholders, including families, staff, and labor partners.”</p>
<p><b>Hygiene</b> Hand washing, face coverings</p>	<p>Teach and reinforce handwashing and healthy hygiene practices among students and staff. LEAs should also consider portable handwashing stations throughout schoolsites and near classrooms. The CDC adds that children younger than two years old should not wear masks.</p> <p>Teach students to wear cloth face coverings. All staff should wear masks. Masks are essential when physical distancing is not practicable. Employers should provide and ensure staff wear masks and required protective equipment. The CDE notes that bus drivers should have surplus masks to distribute to symptomatic students on the bus.</p> <p>The CDPH and CDE adds that teachers can use face shields, if available, which enable younger students to see their teachers’ faces and to avoid potential barriers to phonological instruction.</p> <p>While CDC and CDPH recommends that students be “encouraged” to wear masks, the CDE states that all students “should” wear masks.</p>
<p><b>Daily Operations</b> Screening and monitoring</p>	<p>Implement screening and other procedures for all staff and students entering the facility. Conduct visual wellness checks of all students and take students’ temperature with a no-touch thermometer.</p> <p>Actively encourage staff and students who are sick or who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 to stay home.</p> <p>Document/track incidents of possible exposure and notify local health officials, staff and families immediately of any positive case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality, as required under FERPA and state laws.</p> <p>Monitor staff and students throughout the day for signs of illness; send home students and staff with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough or other COVID-19 symptoms.</p> <p>The CDC adds that parents should be instructed to screen students before leaving for school.</p>
<p><b>Physical Distancing</b> Classroom and non-classroom settings</p>	<p><b>Classroom.</b> Students, staff, and teachers should remain in the same space and in groups as small and consistent as practicable. Consider ways to establish separation of students through other means if practicable, such as six feet between desks, desk partitions, floor markings to promote distancing, or arranging desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.</p>

	<p>While CDE and CDC recommend keeping individuals six feet apart in most instances, the CDPH guidance provides some flexibility by noting that individuals and desks should be kept six feet apart “as practicable”.</p> <p><b>Non-classroom.</b> Stagger arrival and drop off-times and locations. Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible. Limit nonessential visitors and volunteers. Limit communal activities where practicable. Minimize congregated movement through hallways as much as practicable. Serve meals in classrooms or outdoors instead of cafeterias. Consider holding recess activities in separated areas designated by class.</p> <p>The CDC notes that physical education and athletics should be limited to activities that do not involve physical contact with other students. The CDE encourages using flexible worksites or telework where possible.</p>
<p><b>Facility Cleaning and Supplies</b></p>	<p>Disinfect frequently-touched surfaces in between uses (e.g., desks, tables, chairs, schoolbus seats, keyboards). Daily disinfect door handles, drinking fountains, playground equipment, toys (if not more frequently). Increase ventilation using outdoor air (when safe). Outside organizations must follow the same procedures when sharing facilities.</p> <p>Use EPA “<a href="#">List N</a>” products for cleaning. Custodial staff must have proper PPE (gloves, eye protection, respiratory protection) as required by product instructions. Support <a href="#">healthy hygiene</a> behaviors by providing adequate supplies: soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.</p>
<p><b>Employee Issues</b> Collective bargaining, leave plans, and staffing</p>	<p>The CDE encouraged districts and bargaining representatives to revisit their collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) anticipate issues, ideally prior to reopening. Schools should ensure staffing levels are sufficient to meet unique needs of facility, health, student learning, and safety issues. Consider rolling staff cohorts to meet needs and avoid overwork. Protect and support high risk staff such as telework or negotiated change in classification or duties. The CDE “encourages” LEAs to complete MOUs with bargaining units prior to the reopening of schools.</p> <p>If reasonable accommodations are not practicable, work with employee to develop a flexible leave plan that avoids exhausting the employee’s earned leave. Develop collaboration time between teachers and administrators to analyze data, identify shifts and changes in instruction to meet student needs. Provide professional learning for teachers on diagnostic assessments.</p> <p>The CDPH suggests schools to actively encourage staff to remain home (without fear of reprisal) when sick or after close contact with a person who tests positive. LEAs should monitor staff absenteeism and have a roster of trained back-up staff where available. LEAs should identify a staff liaison(s) to respond to Covid-19 concerns and also develop a communication system that allows staff to self-report symptoms.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Positive Cases or Community Surge</b></p>	<p>Positive cases: Identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19. Establish procedures to arrange for safe transport home or to a healthcare facility, as appropriate, when an individual is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. Close off areas used by any sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. To reduce risk of exposure, wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect.</p> <p>Considerations for Partial or Total Closures: In consultation with the local public health department, the appropriate school official may decide whether school closure is warranted, including the length of time necessary, based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.</p> <p>Develop a plan for continuity of education. Consider in that plan how to also continue nutrition and other services provided in the regular school setting to establish alternate mechanisms for these services to continue.</p>