



# Ask Dr. Rodriguez



Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)  
Edition #23 – Week of September 14, 2020

*Questions are quoted as I received them directly from our community*

## **1. How is my child's participation in Distance Learning being monitored?**

SB98 requires that each district/charter must have a plan for recording daily attendance and participation. This is to ensure that the LEA is offering the required number of instructional days and minutes, documenting absences, and documenting daily participation for each student, each school day. While in Distance Learning, instructional minutes is made up of synchronous time and asynchronous time used to complete assignments. To ensure that we are following state regulations, student instructional minutes and participation are being monitored as follows:

### Elementary Students

The weekly planners posted in Google Classroom document the length of the instructional day as well as inform parents and students of expected learning goals and activities. Daily attendance will be taken and the teacher will record if students are fully, partially or not at all completing daily synchronous and asynchronous work.

### Middle and High School Students

The weekly planners posted in Google Classroom serve to document the length of the instructional day as well as inform parents and students of expected learning goals and activities. Daily attendance will be taken for each class period, including Advisory. The Synergy Gradebook serves to document if students are fully, partially or not at all completing work assigned.

## **2. With recent news articles about teacher deaths, spread/virus load in children and political influence on the CDC, will PVUSD remain closed to protect our children and their teachers/families for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year?**

For consistency and stability for our families and staff, we determined collectively with PVFT and CSEA that we will engage in distance learning for the entire first semester. We will continue to monitor the current health conditions throughout these next several months and prepare our facilities and infrastructure for physically returning to school sometime during the next semester, if the conditions allow.

## **3. Are we physically returning to school in January? Staff members need to know what the plan is so we can make decisions regarding our own health/well-being.**

We will not be able to make the determination of when we will physically return to schools for several months. We need to see how health conditions shift for both the County and the cities within our District. System-wide, we are preparing for surveillance testing, contact tracing and health education.

For each school site, we are creating a Return to School Readiness Index that will include factors such as HVAC/Air Circulation, Preparation of Classrooms, Signage, Transportation, Nutrition Services, Health and Safety Education, and Communication Systems. The goal of the Return to School Readiness Index is to ensure that our students, staff and schools are ready when the overall health conditions improve to the point that we can safely return.

4. **With SC county dropping to "red" from "purple", is there a possibility of small groups of resource/ spec ed students being allowed to meet with teachers on campus? I understand PVUSD is continuing distance learning through the end of the year, but I feel like some of the kids who are struggling most really need to be returned to in-person instruction as soon as possible.**

We successfully began the implementation of the Safe Spaces at both Pajaro Middle School and Aptos Junior High. We also began our required in person assessment of special education students this past week. We are now looking at the special education students and their individual goals noted on their IEPs to determine which additional resources and supports are needed to meet those goals. These supports could include limited in-person instruction once we are able to ensure the safety of both students, their families and our staff.

5. **Distance learning is just not working for special ed students. My child cannot tolerate looking at a screen for more than 5 minutes. He's not getting anything out of this and I feel like I'm being asked to sign in everyday just so the district gets funding. When are we physically returning to school, and how will my child be kept safe?**

I encourage you to reach out to your child's case manager to identify additional resources that can be provided to your child during distance learning. We are in the process of identifying special education students who are not meeting their IEP goals. When we do return small groups physically to school, we will follow the guidance from the California Department of Health on small groups: ensuring cohorts consist of no more than 16 students with adults in a supervised area, implementing physical distancing when possible, providing personal protective equipment such as face shields, face masks, and plexiglass partitions and convening in properly ventilated rooms.

6. **Is the district looking into purchasing hot spots from different providers? Some of the residences in my attendance area do not get T-Mobile signal but might get signal from different phone providers.**

Yes, we have ordered 300 Verizon hotspots that should be ready to deploy in about 2-3 weeks for areas that cannot be serviced by the T-Mobile hotspots.

7. **We'd like to donate funds specifically to help families without reliable internet connections, or that will help families with related challenges to participating with online classes. What is the district is doing in this regard that financial donations can best support?**

Thank you so much for reaching out to support our students and families as this community works collectively to close the digital divide. PVUSD has partnered with Cruzio, Community Foundation Santa Cruz County and the Watsonville Rotary to launch [Equal Access Santa Cruz County](#), a fund established specifically to raise funds to bring more long-term internet connectivity to families in need. Donations can be made at the Equal Access Santa Cruz County site through the link above. When you donate you may include a note to designate that your donation is specifically for PVUSD students and families.

**8. My child was absent from online classes because our internet was not working. I sent an email to the teacher that day because they put him down as an unexcused absence and I did communicate with the teacher about why he was absent. What can I do or who can I communicate with so they change the absence?**

Please contact the site principal and inform them that the absence was due to an internet issue. Site administration has been informed that all absences related to internet connectivity will be excused. If the connectivity issue persists, your child can engage in the Interactive Dialogue Process with the District Wellness Team so your child can receive the support or interventions necessary to help resolve the problem.

**9. Why are students being allowed to register for school without proof of immunization compliance, as directed by shots for school? Who is responsible for making sure these students are not allowed without following the guidelines required by the state to keep all of our students safe from contagious diseases?**

All of our students in the District must show proof of immunization compliance unless they are in one of the subgroups noted below. The State of California has mandated that immunizations must be up to date before students can begin school, even with virtual learning. The exceptions are home schooled children who do not meet with others at all. Foster children, homeless children, and migrant children have 30 days from enrollment to obtain immunization records and districts are required to help get the records. Special education students are another exception and do not have to be up to date or have immunizations to access the special education curriculum in their IEPs. Our District Nurses and Health Care Assistants monitor the immunizations of our students.

The state is trying to prevent future additional epidemics that could occur if children are not immunized against communicable diseases. Please refer to the Guide to Immunization Requirements for School Entry:

English <https://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-231.pdf> Spanish <https://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-231S.pdf>

**10. When does practice start for sports?**

Athletic conditioning/workouts for high school began this week. Formal practice is governed by California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) and is noted below:

<u>Fall Sports (Season 1)</u>	<u>Practice Start Date</u>	<u>State Final Date</u>
Cross Country	12/14/2020	3/27/2021
Field Hockey	12/14/2020	N/A
Football	12/14/2020	4/17/2021
Water Polo (Boys & Girls)	12/14/2020	3/20/2021
Volleyball (Boys & Girls)	12/14/2020	3/20/2021
Competitive Cheer	N/A	4/17/2021
Gymnastics	TBD	N/A

<u>Spring Sports (Season 2)</u>	<u>Practice Start Date</u>	<u>State Final Date</u>
Badminton	2/22/2021	5/29/2021
Soccer (Boys & Girls)	2/22/2021	6/5/2021
Tennis (Boys & Girls)	2/22/2021	6/5/2021
Swimming & Diving (Boys & Girls)	3/8/2021	6/5/2021
Wrestling (Boys & Girls)	3/15/2021	6/12/2021
Basketball (Boys & Girls)	3/15/2021	6/19/2021
Baseball	3/15/2021	6/26/2021
Golf (Boys & Girls)	3/15/2021	6/23/2021
Lacrosse (Boys & Girls)	3/15/2021	N/A
Softball	3/15/2021	6/26/2021
CSC	3/15/2021	N/A
Track & Field	3/15/2021	6/26/2021