



Ask Dr. Rodriguez



Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Edition #29 – Week of October 26, 2020

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

1. Can I change my profile picture back real quick? Please with sprinkles and a cherry on top.

Students were able to change their profile picture at the beginning of the school year. Currently, schools have been working with Lifetouch to take new student portraits over the past few weeks. Once they are done, these new Lifetouch portraits will be imported by Technology Services and replace current students' profile pictures in StudentVUE and in Google. Students will then be allowed once again to replace their profile picture (if they want to) with an appropriate identifiable picture of their choosing. Going forward this process will take place once a year after the Lifetouch pictures are provided to Technology Services.

2. What are you doing to ensure students have a way to communicate informally? Google Hangout at least have them a small slice of normality. Having conversations like they would at lunch or in the halls. This sole focus on academics and taking away what little normal interaction they have with peers is cruel, shortsighted and a detriment to their mental health. Please fix this.

In order to comply with legal requirements, PVUSD cannot provide access to Google Hangouts Chat. Students can still communicate with friends through email, or by collaborating in Google Docs, Slides, and Sheets. Unlike Google Chat, these systems are monitored allowing district staff the ability to make sure that they are being used appropriately and safely. We recently purchased Remind Application to replace some of the features of Google Chat - this implementation will take place in the next few weeks. With parent permission, guidance, and oversight, students may also create their own accounts in social media and other communication systems to use for non-academic communication with friends. The Common Sense Media site has some great information for parents to help them support their children while using social media. You can find the information in English at: <https://www.common sense media.org/social-media> or in Spanish at <https://www.common sense media.org/espanol/blog/social-media>

3. Cameras on is extremely teacher centered. But some teachers say it's the district's pressure. Who is making this call of asking to have the cameras on? Have they done research on how damaging these requests are to our students? How can we educate them on the matter to better support our students.

The District's position continues to be that students are not required to turn on cameras. However, as I have noted in previous Ask Dr. Rodriguez FAQs and other communications, there are times when it is very important for teachers to be able to see students to provide

corrective feedback such as during foundational literacy and small group instruction. While there is significant [discussion and many articles](#) on the issue, there currently is no correlational or causal research available on this issue. We are following the work of Shawn Kim, Director of Digital Learning from the Stanford Office of Innovation and Technology and others to understand its impacts. We have also formed a focus group with students, families and staff to identify solutions and recommendations.

- 4. If students go back to school in January, should parents be sending their kids to school with a little cough or runny nose? Also, if a teacher notices a student with those symptoms WITHOUT a temperature will they be sent home? Since we can't tell the difference between regular cold symptoms, flu, and COVID-19, I am concerned with students and staff being exposed. Additionally I am concerned because some people show no symptoms at all. If a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 will the school or just the class be shut down since many people at that point could have been exposed? Will the district pay for parents having to miss work because another child has exposed their child or themselves and they have to take time off work? Thank you in advance for your response.**

Once we are back at school physically, when a student arrives at school, they will pass through a thermal scanner which will check for their temperature to see if it is over 100.4 degrees. They will also be asked two questions. One question is regarding possible exposure to anyone who is COVID-19 positive over the last 14 days. The second question is whether they have any of the following symptoms associated with COVID-19 including: Cough, Short of Breath, Difficulty Breathing, Chills, Fatigue, Muscle aches, Congestion / Runny Nose, Sore Throat, Headache, New loss of taste or smell, Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea. If the student has an affirmative response to any of one of these areas, the student will not be allowed to stay at school. If a child has any of these symptoms at home before heading to school, they should stay home. A teacher will send a student to the Health Office if they see that the child is exhibiting any of the symptoms listed above regardless of temperature.

We will follow the guidelines set forth by the California Department of Health (CDPH) regarding the closure of both classrooms and schools. According to CDPH, if 5% of students and teachers in a classroom or cohort test positive for the virus, the classroom must be closed, followed by 14 days of quarantine for all who may have had close contact with those who have tested positive. For most classrooms, this would take place if one individual tests positive. If a school experienced a 5% positive testing rate of both students and teachers, the entire school would have to close, with everyone subject to 14 days of quarantine. In addition, a best practice is to close a school if there is an outbreak impacting different cohorts of students. Students and staff with close contact to the positive case(s) would need to isolate for 14 days. If 1 in 4 schools in a district had a 5% positive rate, the entire district would close for in-person instruction. Students and staff with close contact to the positive case(s) would need to isolate for 14 days. As is normally the case, parents will not be compensated by the District to care for their children.

- 5. Why is it important to respond to the survey (PVUSD Return to School in January 2021 - Hybrid Instructional Mode)? In my opinion, the children should return to school and take their class in person. How will the results of the survey affect the parents that want their children back in the classrooms?**

We need to hear the perspective of all stakeholders from all areas of the District. The survey results will support PVUSD in creating a plan to expand in person instruction that meets the

needs of students, families and staff. The results will provide us information to allow for planning on the number of staff needed on campus to safely deliver the hybrid model of instruction for the number of students who wish to return back physically to campus.

6. What options will staff and families have that do not feel comfortable returning to in person teaching?

Students and families that do not feel comfortable returning back to campus, when we do return, will have the option to stay with distance learning using the same format and schedule as we are using for the fall semester. The number of students and families who wish to stay in distance learning will determine the number of staff members that can stay with distance learning as well. Parents who do not feel comfortable returning to in-person teaching may also enroll their children in the PVUSD Virtual Academy if they believe that an independent study program is best to meet their student's needs.

7. What are the odds that schools will reopen with some sort of in-class learning in January? I, like most discourage parents, can't handle another half a school year distance learning. I currently have a 1st and 3rd grader and will be considering other options next year if it stays distance learning.

PVUSD is doing its part to be ready for return of in person instruction through ensuring system readiness including launching of surveillance testing, training staff on contact tracing, implementing a readiness index for each site and developing a comprehensive plan with all stakeholders. However, it is important we are all aware of factors out of our control that can impact return of in-person instruction at any time, including county health risk level, local epidemiological conditions, and specific exposures, clusters and outbreaks.

8. How will you ensure that you are testing all of the staff for COVID-19?

Any staff member who is in contact with students will be tested for COVID-19. In partnership with Stanford University and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, PVUSD will have a mobile Surveillance Testing System which will go to all PVUSD sites and departments. The mobile unit will meet the California Department of Public Health recommendation of testing at least 25% of staff every 2 weeks. Employees will also be able to sign up for additional random testing.

9. I am a high school teacher in the district. In past years, there has been great emphasis on how to protect our students in case of active shooter threats. One way that we are encouraged to keep our students safe is by keeping our classroom doors closed and locked during class, and keeping our windows closed and covered. If we return to class in-person, I have been hearing that it would be ideal to keep doors and windows open to allow for air to circulate and reduce the spread of Covid. How can we keep students safe from active shooter threats while also allowing for the free flow of air? How does the district plan to address these conflicting but equally important and dangerous threats?

Before distance learning began in the spring, the district had recently enhanced the active shooter protocols and training through the use of ALICE procedures. ALICE preparedness highlights the need to be; Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. This comprehensive preparedness and training program provides effective active shooter training through drills which are based on the premise that you have two options to increase survival in an active event; 1) Remove yourself from the danger and get to safety or 2) The event is taken back under control. During training, PVUSD staff participated in drills and reviewed national incident and survival statistics which reinforced that more often than not, evacuation

is the safest route for survival. We also learned that in previous incidents, there were often missed opportunities to be **Alert** and to **Inform** both during the incident and prior to an actual active incident. PVUSD has increased the number of mental health clinicians on staff, training in social emotional learning and trauma-informed practices, and grown partnerships that provide care to our students, families and staff which are all ways that can prevent critical incidents that could escalate or result in violence. Elevating **Alert** and **Inform** along with **Evacuation** will need to be re-emphasized upon return to in person instruction. We will also provide reminders of best options in the event a **Lockdown** is needed. These will include; keeping classroom doors open but in a locked position so they can easily be closed if needed and looking at options within the room to deploy a fortification, barricades, spreading out methods, and ultimately being prepared for a **Counter** should it be needed.

10. With friends/family members working at a few sites across the district, I keep hearing about office/admin not wearing masks in their offices and putting masks on when people come in. Since these are places that other people have to come into for meetings and other purposes, why is this allowed with an airborne virus?

To ensure the health and safety of the PVUSD community we all must follow a number of guidelines from health authorities. All staff are completing their health screening daily, and do not come to work if they are sick or have symptoms. We know that face coverings provide protection for ourselves and others. Maintaining 6 feet of distance between people also provides protection. The CDC continues to stress physical distancing as an important mitigating factor. PVUSD has determined that filters in the buildings are sufficient to clean the virus out of the air or their site/department is undergoing repairs. Some offices have been supplied with portable HVAC filter systems for staff to use until the building HVAC repairs have been completed. All PVUSD locations are disinfected daily to ensure that staff arrive to clean sites and offices. PVUSD is also following the guidelines provided by the Santa Cruz Health Services Agency:

When are Face Coverings Required?

At Work:

- If you are interacting with any member of the public
- If you are working in any space visited by members of the public, such as a reception area, a restroom, waiting room, exam room
- If you are working in or walking through any common areas such as hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities
- If you are in a private office and someone comes in to see you
- If you are in a private cubicle, but are less than 6 feet from someone walking by or present in your cubicle

Here is a link to the Santa Cruz County Health Services Face Covering Guidance <https://www.santacruzhealth.org/Portals/7/pdfs/coronavirus/Face%20Covering%20Guidance%20081820.pdf?version=052520>