



Ask Dr. Rodriguez



Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Edition #36 – Week of January 11, 2021

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

- 1. Is there any word on when we will be eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine? There is a tentative plan to go back to in person school in March and it would be a great relief to know all school staff have been vaccinated against COVID-19.**

We are partnering with the COE, County Public Health, Cabrillo College Nursing Department and Salud Para la Gente to begin vaccinating our school community as soon as our county moves to tier 1B. We are also gathering information about what Multi County Entities like Sutter/PAMF and Dignity are doing to make vaccinations available to their patient base. In preparation of this effort, we had several of our staff vaccinated as part of the 1A tier including some of our school nurses, medical assistants and a licensed vocational nurse. We will be entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with Cabrillo College Nurse Residency Program to provide us with additional staff who can administer the vaccine to our school community.

- 2. When are staff members going to receive the COVID vaccination (either Moderna or Pfizer)? If you expect us to return to in-person instruction in March, then I would imagine we need to start getting vaccinated sooner rather than later.**

Staff may be able to begin receiving vaccines through the multi county entities in the very near future as we prepare our effort through COE, County Public Health, Cabrillo College Nursing Department and Salud para la Gente. Our hope is to vaccinate our entire school community by early February.

- 3. I am a parent of a first grade and seventh grade student. While it's been a challenging year, we are so glad to be part of a district that has put our safety first. Today, I read that districts will be paid for returning. I know that money is always an issue in any district. Will PVUSD put aside our kids' safety to get a state incentive? (I understand that the virtual school that some kids go to is not daily instruction with a teacher the way our regular virtual schools are and would not be a smart choice for many families that might not be able to give as much support at home).**

PVUSD continues to place the health and safety of our students, staff and families at the forefront of our decisions. PVUSD remains committed to ensuring that parents have the option of distance learning in its current format with live, daily instruction for the entire 2020-2021 school year. For those who wish to return once health conditions permit, PVUSD's Contingency Plan has all of the core mitigation strategies noted by Governor Newsom including securing and providing personal protective equipment (PPE), ensuring physical distancing, establishing stable groupings, ensuring hand hygiene, improving ventilation and screening of symptoms. Some examples of measures already taken by PVUSD include:

- Purchase of additional PPE and face shields for all staff and students
- Installation of hand sanitizer stations throughout the campus at entrances and within classrooms without sinks

- Acquisition of three-sided barriers for individual student desks to promote physical distancing
- Comprehensive Interagency evaluation of ventilation system throughout district with \$4 Million of repairs to facilities HVAC and windows
- Purchase of 1,200 HEPA filters for all classrooms and areas with the need for additional ventilation
- Installation of thermal scanners for symptom screening at each site
- Began Surveillance Testing through Stanford University on December 4, 2021
- Plan to begin vaccination of all staff

4. How can you justify the effects and long-term damage of a year-long school closure based on teachers claiming to fear risking their lives to educate our children yet have been seen joyfully shopping around town? The governor wants to reopen schools much sooner than March yet PVUSD continues to keep low-income students caged at home with no updates from you since Dec 7th.

On November 16, 2020, PVUSD provided the community with a joint press release stating that PVUSD would remain in distance learning until March 1, 2020. We remain committed to that date. For the last 36 weeks, I have provided Friday updates to address any questions that students, staff and families have and will continue to do so. PVUSD has been providing in person instruction and support through our seven Safe Spaces and to small groups of students with special needs. However, PVUSD will not be able to provide in person hybrid instruction until health conditions improve. As noted in the new [Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) released on January 14, 2021, schools in Santa Cruz County may not resume for in person instruction until we are below the 25 per 100,000 case rate threshold. As of the beginning of this week, Santa Cruz County had a case rate of 59 per 100,000 and rising. Below is an excerpt from the Guidance document:

Purple Tier. Schools may not reopen for grades 7-12 if the county is in Purple Tier. Subject to the limitation in the bullet immediately below, schools serving grades K-6 may reopen for in-person instruction in the Purple Tier, including during a State of California Regional Stay at Home Order, if they complete and post a CSP to their website homepage and submit the CSP to their local health officer (LHO) and the State Safe Schools for All Team and there are no identified deficiencies, as described in the Covid-19 Safety Plan (CSP) Posting and Submission Requirements for In-Person Instruction [section](#) below.

K-6 schools in counties in Purple Tier with CR>25: Schools serving students in grades K-6 may not reopen for in-person instruction in counties with adjusted CR above 25 cases per 100,000 population per day. They may post and submit a CSP, but they are not permitted to resume in-person instruction until the adjusted CR has been less than 25 per 100,000 population per day for at least 5 consecutive days. This case rate reflects [recommendations](#) from the Harvard Global Health Institute analysis of safe school reopening policy. Please find additional information on how the adjusted CR is calculated [here](#). Recognizing that re-opening for in-person instruction takes time to routinize and improve safety, and that some schools may have already been conducting in-person learning successfully and had time to optimize all their policies and procedures to support minimal disease transmission on-site and detect new cases, schools who have already opened, as defined above, with minimal or no in-school transmission, may remain open and may consider increasing testing per CDPH supported testing [framework](#).

Yellow	Orange	Red	Purple
CR <1.0* TP <2%	CR 1-3.9* TP 2-4.9%	CR 4-7* TP 5-8%	CR >7* TP >8%
- CSP posted publicly for K-12 th grades 5 days prior to in-person instruction.	- CSP posted publicly for K-12 th grades 5 days prior to in-person instruction.	- CSP posted publicly for K-12 th grades 5 days prior to in-person instruction. - Must be in Red 5 days prior to reopening.	- <u>Already reopened</u> : CSP posted publicly by 02/01/21. - <u>Not previously open</u> : - CSP posted publicly for K-6, and submitted concurrently to LHD and State Safe Schools for All Team. - 7 business days for review. - 7 th -12 th grade reopening not permitted if CR >7*. - K-6 th grade reopening not permitted if CR >25*, though CSP can be posted and submitted for review. - Note: Targeted in-person instruction may be offered pursuant to the Cohorting Guidance.

*Adjusted case rate.

5. If staff members are in common areas alone, yet other staff Members could potentially walk through that area are they required to wear a mask? (Staff work rooms, bathrooms, front office, meeting rooms, and so on).

If staff members are in common areas, they must wear their masks unless they are in one of the following exceptions:

- Actively eating or drinking as long as 6 feet of social distance from others is maintained
- Outdoor and maintaining at least 6 feet of physical distance from others
- Employees who cannot wear face coverings due to a medical or mental health condition or disability and who have had an interactive process meeting with Human Resources
- Employees who are hearing impaired or communicating with a hearing-impaired person, where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication

6. Do staff working on site have to quarantine for 14 days if they have traveled outside of the state or country for the holidays?

Yes, consistent with the staff memo that I sent out on November 18, 2020, staff working on site should quarantine if they have traveled outside the state or country for the holidays. My memo to staff noted the tremendous job we have done over the last several months taking care of each other and protecting each other's health through our safe actions and following health guidelines. I appreciate that staff is aware of how their actions affect those they both work with and live with. I encouraged everyone to engage in virtual gatherings whenever possible and to limit in person gatherings to immediate family. The requirement to quarantine was a result of Governor Newsom's travel advisory regarding travel out of the state or country. The travel advisory can be found here: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Travel-Advisory.aspx>. The only recent change, as of January 6, 2021, to the travel advisory was the Governor has stated that those who are traveling out of state or country for non-essential purposes should quarantine for 10 days, rather than the previously required 14 days after arriving back in California.

As a result of this travel advisory, if staff working on site traveled out of the state or country to visit with family or for other leisure activities, staff need to self-quarantine for 10 days upon return. For those who are required to report to work in person, staff need to use sick leave or vacation to cover this absence. If staff do not have vacation or sick leave available, the 10 days of self-quarantine will be unpaid. If, however, you are traveling out of the state or country for reasons outside of your

choice or control, such as for medical care or a funeral, please contact Human Resources to discuss what types of leaves or arrangements may be available to you.

7. Hello Dr. Rodriguez, Do parents and students need to engage in symptom screening and temperature checks before entering the front office/School even if they only have a "quick" question? -- Thank you

Yes, all members of the public, including outside contractors and vendors, must engage in symptom screening and a temperature check upon arrival to a school site or department regardless of the extent of time they will be on campus. All individual departments and school sites must have a location established to use the following posters to engage in the symptom screening. Temperature must be taken by either a thermal scanner or a no touch thermometer. Only members of the public who pass the screening will be provided service in an effort to minimize contact. At the District Office, the doors are being retrofitted to secure the building to establish public entrances. Staff will have keyless entry for non-public entrances by the end of March. These guidelines are established to limit the amount of close contacts to our staff. CDPH defines a close contact as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes within any 24-hour period during the COVID-19 case's "high risk exposure period."



8. If Synergy automatically populates the Weekly Participation of a student being present or not, then why do we have to fill out the weekly participation?

While in Distance Learning, all schools must document daily participation of each student on each school day, in whole or part, for which distance learning is provided. Participation includes, but is not limited to "evidence of participation in online activities, completion of regular assignments, completion of assessments" and contact with an employee of the LEA and the student or the parent/guardian of the student.

The Synergy attendance is based on student's showing up to Synchronous class time. The weekly engagement allows for teachers to indicate if a student participated in the day by the completion of an assignment, assessment or contact with the student and/or guardian.

9. Many staff are receiving upgraded and new computer equipment, while some of us are still working on machines with Windows 7 and no mic or cameras, which doesn't allow us to fully participate in Zoom/Meet meetings. Any plans to upgrade older machines?

Technology Services has been working hard to make sure that all instructional staff have a new or relatively new laptop to support distance learning. Next week Site and District Technicians will be sending out a Google form for staff to fill out if they feel that their computer is no longer viable. Technology staff will work to upgrade or replace old/outdated computers with newer viable computers. This process may take some time, so Technology will prioritize staff with the oldest non-viable computers that need replacement first.

10. What is happening with high school sports?

PVUSD recognizes the importance of athletics to many students. The California Department of Public Health released the new Youth Sports Guidelines on December 14, 2020: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/outdoor-indoor-recreational-sports.aspx>. PVUSD is required to adhere to the Youth Sports Guidelines which did not allow athletics practices to begin. As noted in the guidelines provided below, we are able to continue with voluntary conditioning which includes physical distancing and stable cohorting of students.

Table: Youth and Adult Recreational Sports* Permitted by Current Tier of County

Widespread Tier (Purple)	Substantial Tier (Red)	Moderate Tier (Orange)	Minimal Tier (Yellow)
1†	2†	3†	4†
<p>Outdoor low-contact sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archery • Badminton • Biking • Bocce • Corn hole • Cross country • Dance (no contact) • Disc golf • Golf • Ice and roller skating (no contact) • Lawn bowling • Martial arts (no contact) • Physical training programs (e.g., yoga, Zumba, Tai chi) • Pickleball (singles) • Rowing/crew (with 1 person) 	<p>Outdoor moderate-contact sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseball • Cheerleading • Dodgeball • Field hockey • Gymnastics • Kickball • Lacrosse (girls/women) • Pickleball (doubles) • Softball 	<p>Outdoor high-contact sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball • Football • Ice hockey • Lacrosse (boys/men) • Rugby • Rowing/crew (with 2 or more people) • Soccer • Volleyball • Water polo <p>Indoor low-contact sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton • Curling • Dance (no contact) • Gymnastics 	<p>Indoor moderate-contact sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheerleading • Dance (intermittent contact) • Dodgeball • Kickball • Pickleball (doubles) • Racquetball • Squash <p>Indoor high-contact sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball • Boxing • Ice hockey • Ice skating (pairs) • Martial arts • Roller derby • Soccer

- Running
- Shuffleboard
- Skeet shooting
- Skiing and snowboarding
- Snowshoeing
- Swimming and diving
- Tennis
- Track and field
- Walking and hiking
- Ice skating (individual)
- Physical training
- Pickleball (singles)
- Swimming and diving
- Tennis
- Track and field
- Volleyball
- Water polo
- Wrestling

*This Table is not exhaustive, but provides examples of sports with different levels of contact so that the level of risk and appropriate Tier can be assessed for other sports.

†All sports permitted in lower tiers, are also permitted in higher tiers.