



Ask Dr. Rodriguez



Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Edition #40 – Week of February 15, 2021

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

1. Will you explain why there is no "COVID Safety Plan" when the district has received over \$40 million in COVID funds? This information is from maps.schools.covid19.ca.gov

PVUSD received \$24.7 Million from the first distribution of CARES Act funding which was used for multiple purposes including some of the following:

- Purchase of additional PPE and face shields for all staff and students
- Installation of hand sanitizer stations throughout all the sites including 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 to date
- Purchase of 1,200 HEPA filters for all classrooms and areas at sites with the need for additional ventilation
- Installation of thermal scanners for symptom screening at each site
- Purchase and monthly fees for 4,250 hot spots for students in need of internet
- Purchase of additional devices and technology for students and staff to support distance learning
- Surveillance Testing of staff through Stanford University

Schools are required to post a compliant COVID-19 Safety Plan prior to reopening for in person instruction. PVUSD is finalizing all three safety documents: 1) the site-specific COVID-19 Prevention Program (CPP) that includes safety procedures to reduce the risk of exposure to an identified pandemic required by CalOSHA emergency general industry safety order, 2) a checklist from California Department of Public Health (CDPH) that satisfies requirements for the safe reopening of schools and 3) a Comprehensive School Safety Plan that addresses the safety concerns identified through a systematic planning process. The Comprehensive School Safety Plan is completed and will be submitted to the County Office of Education after Board approval on February 24, 2021. The CPP and CDPH checklist will be submitted to the County Office of Education by March 15, 2021.

2. National health officials have announced vaccines have a significantly less effect on new variants. Will this evolving virus change or delay plans for our children's return to school? Thanks for taking my query.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](https://www.cdc.gov)), studies suggest that antibodies generated through vaccination with currently authorized vaccines recognize these variants and therefore should not cause a delay to our plans to return to school. CDC notes that viruses constantly change through mutation, and new variants of a virus are expected to occur over time. Sometimes new variants emerge and disappear. Other times, new variants emerge and persist. Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 have been

documented in the United States and globally during this pandemic. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a type of coronavirus, a large family of viruses. Coronaviruses are named for the crown-like spikes on their surfaces. Scientists monitor changes in the virus, including changes to the spikes on the surface of the virus. These studies, including genetic analyses of the virus, are helping scientists understand how changes to the virus might affect how it spreads and what happens to people who are infected with it. This is being closely investigated, more studies are underway and we will share information as soon as it is available.

3. What are the risks of me bringing COVID back from my second grade classroom to my own family?

One of the key factors to ensuring that all of PVUSD's classified, certificated and management employees received the vaccine prior to returning to in person instruction was the safety of the students, staff and families. We do not have enough data yet to definitely say that it protects against transmission of the virus, therefore, we are continuing protective measures such as physical distancing, stable cohorts, masking, maintenance of proper ventilation in buildings and staff surveillance testing. What we do know is that the vaccine is protective against developing the illness in the event of exposure. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides information to common questions at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>. Within their information they provide the following response:

Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19. Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a [severe illness](#), have [long-term health effects](#), or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an [increased risk of developing severe complications](#). Learn more about [how COVID-19 vaccines work](#).

4. When will the 2021-2022 academic school calendar be released?

The Instructional Calendars for 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 were approved at the board meeting on February 10th. The calendars went to the Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers (PVFT) for ratification and were approved. The academic school calendars will be provided to the community in the next weekly update and can be found on our district webpage at the following link: <http://bit.ly/PVUSDCalendars>

5. How and when will substitute teachers be notified to sign up for the vaccine?

We are near the end of vaccinating all current PVUSD employees. Next week we will work on gathering the necessary data for certificated substitutes, classified substitutes, limited term employees, coaches, student teachers and any other temporary employee of the District. When it is time, Human Resources will send out a Google form to this group of employees to begin the process of pre-registering them for vaccines.

6. If and when my children return to school, will their teacher be required to disclose whether they have been vaccinated or not? Personally, I would like to know.

We cannot require employees to disclose personal medical information to their students and their families. To ensure the safety of students and staff, we will still maintain stable cohorts, adhere to physical distancing requirements, maintain proper ventilation of buildings, conduct surveillance testing, and wearing of masks.

7. When you do the breakdown of PVUSD staff that have received the Covid-19 vaccine, a more accurate representation would be by category (classified/certificated). All Early Childhood Staff have not been

vaccinated there is IA's and BT's that will work directly with children that have yet to be vaccinated. Which brings me to my next question why are DO Staff being vaccinated before ALL classified and certificated staff that will work directly with children in special education preschool and early elementary levels?

As of Thursday, 2/18, we have 494 classified staff (50% of all classified staff) and 675 (56% of all certificated staff) who have received the vaccine. We have over 500 employees who will receive their vaccine this weekend. All in person classified and certificated special education employees were notified of the opportunity to be vaccinated last week. They had the opportunity to pre-register and schedule an appointment. In addition, all district office classified and certificated employees were also provided the opportunity to be vaccinated as they work in person. The final pre-registration for the remaining instructional assistants and behavior technicians currently working at home went out on Thursday 2/18.

- 8. Why on Instagram's "pajarovalleyusd" page it was stated that 970 of 2,432 employees have been vaccinated and everyone has had the option of doing so before 2/28 when not everyone has received the preregister link that has been sent out by email to employees and not others?**

Approximately 1600 PVUSD employees will have received access to the vaccine by the end of this weekend. Over the last two weeks, we were providing the preregister link to groups of employees as we are provided access to specific amounts of vaccine supply and appointment dates. By now, every permanent PVUSD employee should have received the preregister link. and will be provided the opportunity to receive the vaccine by February 28, 2021.

- 9. Can we get our spouses vaccinated before we get back to in person? I am excited to get back to in person but I will be a carrier which means my husband can get it from me especially teaching kinder.** Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to provide vaccination appointments to people not identified within tier 1B. Spouses will have to acquire the vaccine through their medical provider or place of employment.

- 10. We were saddened to hear that Aptos Junior High will not have a Yearbook made for the 2020-2021 school year. Even though I'm sure a lot of folks would like to just forget about the year I do see my 6th Grader at Rio Del Mar is getting one. What was the reason for not having a yearbook at AJHS?**

Thank you.

We understand the importance of traditions such as yearbooks. Some school sites were able to identify unique ways to acquire sufficient material for their yearbook. This year, Aptos Junior chose not to create a yearbook as they do not have current school photos for a portion of their student body. In addition, they do not have photos which are traditionally supplied by clubs, students and staff that attend the typical functions such as athletics, assemblies, and rallies. Next year, the yearbook at Aptos Junior will once again be produced by staff, parent volunteers and our students through after school clubs.