



Resolution No. 2020/21-46

Date: February 24, 2021

**APPROVE AMENDED PLAN TO REOPEN SCHOOLS FOR
IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION**

WHEREAS, District schools have remained physically closed for full in-person instruction since March 16, 2020, due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic and national and statewide states of emergencies; and

WHEREAS, on July 22, 2020, the Governing Board adopted the Return to School plan developed with 220 stakeholders including the leadership of the Santa Rosa Teachers Association (SRTA) and the Santa Rosa Classified Chapter 75 (Classified 75), teachers, classified staff, parents, students, and community members; and

WHEREAS, on September 8, 2020, the district partnered with the City of Santa Rosa and the Boys and Girls Club Sonoma-Marin to provide non-instructional support care to our most vulnerable students (special education, English learners, foster youth, and homeless) in October 2020; and

WHEREAS, on December 03, 2020, Governor Newsom orders conditional stay at home orders for regions of the state of which Sonoma County fall under this regional order; and

WHEREAS, on December 14, 2020, the Governing Board adopted the Return to School 2.0 plan edited and reviewed by the original committee of stakeholders representing the leadership of the Santa Rosa Teachers Association (SRTA) and the Santa Rosa Classified Chapter 75 (Classified 75), teachers, classified staff, parents, students, and community members; and

WHEREAS, Individualized Graduation Plan Intervention was approved by the Governing Board on December 14, 2020, to address the need for high school seniors to have the option to choose a different high school graduation path as a result of their grades during the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on December 30, 2020, CDPH released new scientific findings¹ and a corresponding rationale² stating that a growing body of evidence shows particularly strong findings that lower risks of transmission of COVID-19 occur at elementary schools, children have lower rates of infection compared to adults and, even in communities with high COVID-19 case counts, the use of layered and carefully implemented mitigation strategies prevent the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on December 20, 2020, Governor Newsom announces another plan for the return to school entitled the Safe Schools for All Plan; and

WHEREAS, on January 11, 2021, a team of researchers from Duke University and the University of North Carolina issued a report of eleven North Carolina school districts who had more than 90,000 students and staff attending school in-person.³ The report showed that only 0.00035% of students and staff acquired COVID-19 within schools, and there were zero instances of child-to-adult transmission; and

WHEREAS, on January 14, 2021, CDPH published new guidance⁴ which now supersedes and updates all previous CDPH guidance related to schools and COVID-19, with the exception of the Cohort Guidance⁵; and

WHEREAS, according to the January 14, 2021 CDPH guidance, a school with grades K-6 may only reopen in the purple tier when the adjusted county COVID-19 case rate is less than 25 cases per 100,000 population per day for five consecutive days before the school reopens, the District posts its COVID-19 Safety Plan to the District website and submits it to the local county health department and the State's Safe Schools for All team, and seven (7) business days have passed without subsequent disapproval; and

WHEREAS, according to the January 14, 2021 CDPH guidance, every school serving any grade may reopen when the adjusted county COVID-19 case rate is less than seven cases per 100,000 population over a seven-day average (Red Tier or better under California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy⁶), the county remains in the Red Tier for five consecutive days and has not returned to the Purple Tier, the District posts its COVID-19 Safety Plan to the District website, and five (5) calendar days have passed; and

WHEREAS, on January 26, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") released scientific findings and data showing "there has been little evidence that schools have contributed meaningfully to increased community transmission" with preventative safety measures in place.⁷ CDC also urges schools to open, stating "[i]t is critical for schools to open as safely and as quickly as possible for in-person learning." The CDC explained that "[s]chools play an important role in children's educational achievement, health, and wellbeing," and that "schools can also play an important role in slowing the spread of COVID-19 while ensuring that children have a safe and healthy learning environment;"⁸ and

WHEREAS, on February 3, 2021, CDC director, Rochelle Walensky, stated: "vaccination of teachers is not a prerequisite for safe reopening of schools" but warned that new COVID-19 variants popping up across the country could threaten that positive momentum⁹; and

WHEREAS, on February 8, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom held a press conference and provided an update on variant cases of COVID-19 in California, noting that there are approximately 153 cases of the UK variant, but 138 of those cases are in San Diego County; approximately 1,200 cases of the West Coast variant; and zero cases of the Brazilian variant.¹⁰ On February 11, 2021, Governor Newsom announced there were two cases of the South African variant, both in the Bay Area¹¹; and

WHEREAS, from January 15 through February 11, 2021, California has administered approximately 4.4 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine¹², and is currently in the process of providing the vaccine to approximately 15 million eligible individuals within Phase 1A and 1B.¹³ Phase 1B includes employees serving in preschool, elementary, middle, and high schools, and providing educational support services and administration, as well as those involved in child and/or student care are currently eligible for COVID-19 vaccines; and

WHEREAS, the Sonoma County Public Health Department is currently providing vaccines to individuals within Phase 1A and individuals over 70 and school employees in Phase 1B with 109,194 vaccines having been administered to date ¹⁴. Throughout the past two months, the District has been in constant communication with the Sonoma County Office of Education to coordinate and encourage the delivery of COVID-19 vaccinations to District staff. ; and

WHEREAS, as of February 16, 2021, the adjusted county COVID-19 case rate in Sonoma County is approximately 15.4 cases per 100,000 population per day, resulting in a Purple Tier assignment. However, the current adjusted case rate demonstrates a significant decrease from 41.2 cases per 100,000 per day from exactly one month ago.¹⁷ Additionally, the test positivity rate (4.0) and health equity metric (5.4) show significant decreases as well and are data points that we are getting closer to the Red Tier¹⁸; and

WHEREAS, according to the January 14, 2021 CDPH guidance, the COVID-19 Safety Plan requires the District to first consult with its labor partners prior to reopening schools; and

WHEREAS, all memorandums of understanding agreed to between the District and its labor partners and approved by the Board of Trustees recognize the need to transition students and families to return to school for hybrid instruction during the 2020-2021 school year, when it can be done according to CDPH Guidance, and contain health and safety provisions to ensure and protect the welfare and safety of all staff; and

WHEREAS, CDPH, CDC and the U.S. Department of Education released new guidelines for the safe reopening of schools by February 19, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the district is ready for in person instruction for small group cohorts for the district's most vulnerable students and expects additional small group cohorts to begin by March 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the District expects to complete its obligation to consult and negotiate with its labor partners, meet CDPH's timelines and criteria for reopening schools, and revise its COVID-19 Safety Plan (CSP):

COVID-19 Prevention Plan (CPP) and Working Guidelines in light of the expected new guidance by March 2, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the District recognizes the obligation for labor partners to ratify any negotiation agreements with its members that may take two to three weeks for the voting process.

WHEREAS, the Superintendent recommends the 3 transition days for KA-12 teachers to review social emotional strategies, safety protocols, and classroom preparation on March 29 through March 31. Classified staff may participate in these transition days; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent recommends the first day of in-person hybrid instruction for grades KA-6 shall be Thursday, April 1, 2021 for Stable Group A. The first day of in-person hybrid instruction for grades KA-6 Stable Group B shall be Friday April 2, 2021. The first day of in-person hybrid instruction for grades 7-12 shall be Monday, April 26 for Stable Group A and Thursday, April 29 for Stable Group B; and

WHEREAS, the 2021-22 school year is planned to be a full time and in-person instructional model. Hybrid in-person and distance learning are alternate instructional models to be implemented if directed to do so by the state, county or federal officials as a result of COVID-19 data.

WHEREAS, as an institution of learning, the District must ensure the educational well-being of students, as well as their safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the District has taken into consideration local, State and Federal laws, State and local public health guidance, California Department of Education guidance, new and developing laws and regulations, among other relevant information; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Board remains committed to a safe learning and working environment for students and staff, and high educational outcomes for students; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the Superintendent/designee continues to have the tools to ensure the health and safety of students, staff, and families and to ensure student learning continues as health conditions and health risks change.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Santa Rosa City Schools as follows:

Section 1. The Board of Trustees reaffirms the authority delegated to the Superintendent in matters regarding the return to in-person school and the health and safety mitigations so associated.

Section 2. The Board of Trustees hereby adopts and approves the Superintendent's February 24, 2021 reopening recommendations for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year under the Return to School Plan 3.0 as long as the District remains legally permitted to do so.

Special Education and English Learner students can be on campus for in-person instruction on or

before March 1, 2021. Students that are homeless or are foster youth may also participate in the on-site cohorts.

The transition days for Santa Rosa City Schools unit members serving grades KA-12 shall be Monday March 29 through Wednesday March 31.

The first day of in-person hybrid instruction for grades KA-6 shall be Thursday, April 1, 2021. The first day of in-person hybrid instruction for grades 7-12, if permitted to return by CDPH guidelines and law, shall be Monday, April 26, 2021.

Section 4. The Board of Trustees will reevaluate and decide on the instructional models for District schools for the 2021-2022 school year on or before its July 14, 2021 Board meeting.

Section 5. The Board of Trustees directs District administration to continue its efforts with the Sonoma County Health Department to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to every District employee. The Board of Trustees gives thanks to the District's employees for remaining committed to transition to reopening schools from the very beginning of and throughout the school year.

Section 6. The Superintendent is expected to provide regular updates to the Board of Trustees and consult with the Board of Trustees on key decisions related to operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 7. All or any portion of this Resolution or the District's its COVID-19 Safety Plan (CSP): COVID-19 Prevention Plan (CPP) and Working Guidelines may be altered or deleted by formal Board action, if necessary.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 24th day of February 2021, by the following vote:

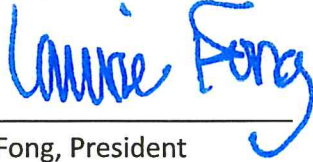
AYES: 7

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 0



Ever Flores, Clerk of the Board



Laurie Fong, President



Ed Sheffield, Director



Stephanie Manieri, Director

2/24/2021

Date



Jill McCormick, Vice President



Alegria De La Cruz, Director



Omar Medina, Director

Footnotes:

¹<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Safe-Schools-for-All-Plan-Science.asp>.

²<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Safe-Schools-for-All-Plan-Rationale.aspx>.

³<https://abc11.com/covid-19-in-schools-study-duke-unc/9568849/http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2021/01/06/peds.2020-048090>.

⁴https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Consolidated_Schools_Guidance.pdf.

⁵ <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/small-groups-child-youth.aspx>.

⁶<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID19CountyMonitoringOverview.aspx>.

⁷ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2775875>.

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/decision-tool.html>.

⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/feb/03/cdc-schools-reopen-teachers-covid-vaccine>.

¹⁰<https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/california-gov-gavin-newsom-covid-19-press-conference-transcript-february-8>.

¹¹<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-02-11/south-african-covid-variant-california-what-to-know>.

¹²<https://www.sacbee.com/news/coronavirus/article248492950.html>; <https://abc7news.com/covid-vaccine-california-tracker-ca-newsom-update/9567632/>.

¹³ <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/VaccineAllocationGuidelines.aspx>

¹⁴ <https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/coronavirus-numbers/>

¹⁵<https://edsources.org/2021/initial-data-for-california-confirm-early-grades-low-income-children-hit-hardest-by-learning-loss/647563>.

¹⁶<https://edsources.org/2021/california-teachers-grapple-with-grading-nearly-a-year-after-initial-school-closures/648376>.

¹⁷https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Blueprint_Data_Chart_020921.xlsx.

¹⁸<https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>