



Ask Dr. Rodriguez



Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Edition #30 – Week of November 2, 2020

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

1. If schools open up in January will kids be able to have breakfast and how will they be safe? How will you have all kids screened and be on time to class and have breakfast?
During the 2020-21 school year, free school meals for breakfast and lunch are available for all children age 1-18. Food and Nutrition Services will provide meals for onsite students or offsite family pick up in every opportunity available. When schools reopen, meals will continue to be made available to children at home doing distance learning as well as offered at school to children attending in class instruction. Food and Nutrition Services is developing solutions such as Grab and Go Meals as well as identifying spaces to eat meals on campus while being able to safely distance from other children. Once we are back at school physically, when a student arrives at school and before they eat breakfast, 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. The thermal scanners were purchased to allow approximately 360 students to have their temperature taken in 30 minutes to expedite the process and ensure they receive full instructional time.

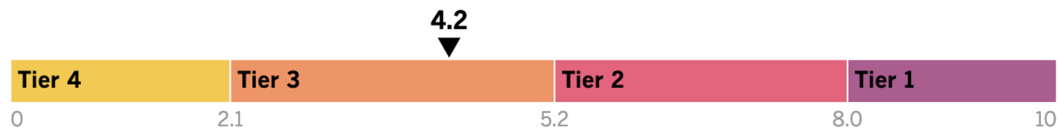
2. How are you tracking local health conditions? Watsonville has a high case count.
It has been clearly documented that certain communities - low-income, Black, Latino, Pacific Islander, and essential workers – have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in terms of higher rates of infection, hospitalizations, and deaths. These disparities create a public health imperative to address exposure in all communities, including especially those disproportionately impacted, as a measure to protect all communities. The Blueprint for a Safer Economy relies on two measures – case rate and test positivity – to determine when a county can move to a less restrictive tier with more sector openings and resultant increased interaction among residents. In order to avoid a surge of infections, the level of baseline infection in a community should be progressively lower as there is more movement and mixing.

Most counties, including Santa Cruz County, have significant differences in test positivity among more and less advantaged neighborhoods, with these differences often also overlapping with race and likelihood of employment as essential workers. The Equity Metric ensures that the test positivity rates in its most disadvantaged neighborhoods, referred to as the Health Equity Quartile of the Healthy Places Index census tracts, do not significantly lag behind its overall county test positivity rate. The majority of the areas monitored through the Santa Cruz County

Equity Index fall within the PVUSD school boundaries. Therefore, we are monitoring the data on the Santa Cruz County Equity Index which is noted in the graphic below:

The third metric measures whether positive tests in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods have significantly exceeded a county's overall rate — a disparity that's been widespread during the pandemic. The statistic is known as the [Healthy Places Index](#). Santa Cruz County's most recent score is 4.2.

Equity index



California Department of Public Health

3. If we had an outbreak at a school, would it shut down? For how long would it be closed?

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 an overall 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.

4. When will the staff surveillance testing begin?

Per California Department of Public Health, staff surveillance testing will be done for each of PVUSD 2500 employees once every 8 weeks, about equates to 70 employees tested every day. We plan to start testing on December 2, 2020 which will provide us time to ensure the system is working smoothly prior to students returning. There will be a mobile unit that visits different sites Tuesday through Fridays, in an 8 week rotation. A nurse will supervise the employee doing their own nasal swab, which will be placed in a test tube and sent that day to Stanford. The tests are being processed at Stanford laboratories and the employee's insurance will be billed, there will be no cost to the employee. The Santa Cruz County Health Department will be given the results by Stanford and they will contact the employee with their results and PVUSD if necessary.

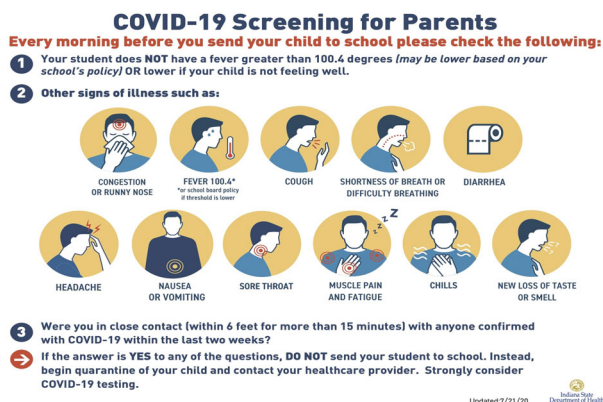
5. What if parents drop off the kids at school knowing they have a cold and the office calls and they don't answer? What will be the next step? Parents don't want the kids at home. They want them to be at school. Are you going to keep those sick kids in the office the whole day?

The District has plans to educate all families regarding the importance of keeping students home when they are sick. This will include information about the risk to others from the COVID virus, or any illness. However, as schools begin to reopen, school nurses and health care assistants will provide health services in the educational setting via the health office. If a student is sick at school, or comes to school sick, they will be taken directly to the Health Office. All sites will have a designated Health Office with four general areas for students. The Health office will have 4 established areas: 1) General Waiting area for students with general first aid needs, 2) Well student area for students that have scheduled medical needs, 3) Separate area with proper distancing set up for students that are sick and need to go home. 4) Health Care Assistant workstation.

Parents will be called to pick up sick students, if the parent is unavailable to pick up the student, the office will then call numbers from the emergency card to have them come to pick up the student. If there is a pattern of sending their child to school sick, a conference will be set up with the site administrator and the school nurse to problem solve with the parent and look at community resources.

6. I see that you will be asking the students if they have been in contact with COVID before they enter the school in the screening. What happens when you ask a TK or kinder or 1st grader and they just stay silent? Many students under second grade don't even respond when asked a question? How will this be solved?

As with our daily communication with students, the staff engaging in the screening process will use age appropriate language and signage similar to the chart found below to assist the younger students in understanding the screening process. The questions asked during the screening process will also be information that will be included in the health education provided to the families in December. Anytime that the parent is present at either the bus stop or at school drop off zone, the parents can also respond to the questions about symptoms and COVID contacts. All families will receive guidance and routine reminders not to send children to school if the screening questions cannot be passed.



7. What should I do if my child has on-going allergies that show symptoms similar to COVID-19? He cannot stay home every day due to his allergies.

It is true that allergy symptoms can look like a possible COVID case, and the health care assistants have been educated by the school nurses about allergy symptoms. If a child has allergies, the parent can proactively work with their medical professional to identify solutions. Parents may also call the school and let the health care assistant know the allergy symptoms that their child has, how often the child is experiencing them and if the child is taking allergy

medication. This information will go into the Synergy health database. If the child's allergy symptoms become worse at school, the HCA will look up the health info in Synergy, call the parent to let them know that the student's allergies are acting up, and let the parent determine if the child needs to go home. Hopefully, the child will remain in school. If the child is having symptoms that are not typical of their allergy pattern, the parent will be notified and if the symptoms look like COVID, the child will be placed in a safe place until the parent picks them up.

8. As administrators, coaches, and assistant superintendents are starting to observe, evaluate, and give feedback more often, I was wondering if it might be feasible for them to try teaching a distance learning lesson. Having taught a lesson through this format might make their expectations more realistic and give them more empathy for the situation. While having feedback is critical to improve our strategies and skills, it is also important to have experience before evaluating. I would hope that those who are overseeing and creating our educational plans are getting a chance to try out this new form of teaching. This would also apply to when and if we switch to teaching with the hybrid model.

It would be very beneficial for all staff to understand each other's successes and challenges. For the last three years, I have engaged in a monthly experience I call "Day in the Life of" to feel the perspective of different employee roles including Teachers, Coaches, Custodians, Health Care Assistants, and Bus Drivers. Following that belief, all instructional coaches and the majority of site administrators and Expanded Cabinet have covered classes in support of absent teachers and staff. This experience allowed them to have a better understanding of the challenges and be able to provide better feedback and support.

9. I didn't feel that you directly answered question #10 in Edition 29 of the Q&A. In your answer to that question, you state that masks must be worn "If you are working in any space visited by members of the public, such as a reception area, a restroom, waiting room, exam room". Yet many office staff only put their masks on when people enter the office. What are you actually doing to address this now? If it's happening now, imagine what will happen when sites are fully staffed and students are attending?

All staff working in public areas must be wearing masks at all times. If that is not happening, the employee or community member should inform the site or department administrator/supervisor. If there is no resolution, then the employee or community member should contact the Assistant Superintendent who oversees the site or department. When it is a repeated issue, we have administered disciplinary action to employees.

10. How much did it cost to create the video for the PVUSD facilities tour including drone footage? How much did it cost to create the "Fill your Cup" logo and branding? Is this the best use of district resources in this unprecedented time of a global pandemic where resources are stretched thin?

We are fortunate to have very capable Facilities Staff who did the drone filming and the support of our Public Information Officer who created the video for the PVUSD Facilities Tour in house. Therefore, there was no cost to the District. Each year, we create a new high-quality digital logo which costs the district approximately \$500.00. To minimize the other costs, we create all of the yearly slogan banners and posters in my office so there is only the cost of the paper.