



FORESTVILLE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

7/27/2020

Dear Forestville Families,

You may have heard that Governor Gavin Newsom provided new state guidance for schools on Friday, July 17, 2020. As I shared in a previous email, this guidance impacts our school district's plans for the fall and means that Forestville students will be starting off with distance learning. I am writing to continue to update you on what we know about school reopening and start to outline the next steps that we will be taking to prepare for a safe and successful school year. Some of the information in this update will be a repeat of what I have already shared, but we want to make sure that parents, guardians, and students are kept informed as much as possible. Thank you for your ongoing patience and understanding during these challenging and quickly-changing times. Together, we will provide our children with the best education possible!

Sincerely,
Renee Semik

New State Guidelines

Beginning in Distance Learning

The governor announced on Friday, July 17, that any district whose schools are in a county that is on the state "watch/monitoring" list will not be able to open for in-person learning until they are off that list for 14 days. We know that Sonoma county will be on that list until at least Aug. 2. That means the earliest that we or any Sonoma County district could open for in-person instruction would be August 14. **For our school district, this means that we will begin classes in distance learning.** Classes will be held virtually. We are currently working with our teachers and staff to create a schedule so that parents, guardians, and students know the weekly expectations for instruction, classwork, homework, enrichment, etc. The state has said that districts that are on the "watch/monitoring" list can request a waiver to have one on one or small groups of students on campus to meet with teachers, staff, or administrators to support particularly vulnerable student groups like our English learners and students with special needs. When we get more guidance from the state and county about this, we will review it and determine if it is something that we want to pursue for Forestville students and staff.

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2020-2021



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Masks

The governor provided new statewide mask requirements for schools (*once in-person learning resumes*). These include:

Student Face Covering Requirements

Age	Face Covering Requirement
Under 2 years	No
2 years - 2nd grade	Strongly encouraged. Face shield can be worn instead of mask
Third grade and above	Yes, unless exempt according to CDPH guidelines

1. All staff must wear face coverings unless exempt
2. Schools are being required to exclude students from campus if they are not exempt and refuse to wear a mask provided by the school. If you do not feel comfortable sending your child to school in a mask, please contact Renee Semik or Jennifer Hegenbart to discuss distance learning options for your child. (Again, this is once in-person learning resumes).
3. Children can remove their masks for meals, naps, and outdoor recreation.

Learn More

- Following are links to the new guidance documents for schools:
 - [COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year](#)
 - [Industry Guidance for Schools & School-based Programs](#)

Our Next Steps

Your Forestville teachers, staff, and administrators are diligently preparing for a strong distance learning program to begin in August. This includes:

- Providing teachers and staff with professional development and training in distance learning strategies and best practices, access to our publishers' online curriculum, our new social emotional program "Leader in Me", and other online platforms.

As the new school year approaches, here are some ways that you can help your child prepare and understand what to expect:

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- Students will be expected to attend school daily by being a part of a scheduled class or classes.
 - Students will have time for scheduled brain breaks, movement breaks, and lunch daily.
 - Students will receive enrichment opportunities in music and art.
 - Students and families that need a device and/or internet connection for work at home will be able to borrow a device from the district for use during distance learning. The district will be sending out a survey to parents/guardians about your family's technology needs for this fall so we can make sure to accommodate all our student and family needs.

FAQs

Q: When will our schools reopen for in-person instruction?

A: Under the new guidelines, schools cannot open for in-person learning as long as their county is on the state's monitoring/watch list. The county must be off the watch list for 14 consecutive days before a school can consider offering in-person learning. As of today, Sonoma County remains on the watch list at least until Aug. 2. It is not yet clear whether Sonoma County will be removed from the watch list, but even if it is, schools must still wait two weeks to reopen (Aug. 14). In order to provide families and staff clarity around what they can expect, we are planning to begin the year in distance learning. We are currently working with our teachers and reopening team to determine a date that we will reassess whether we will be staying in distance learning or transitioning to in person instruction. We are very conscious of avoiding a yo-yo effect where students and staff are distance learning and then in person and then back to distance learning and then back to in person learning. We know that does not support the stability and routine that our students need to be successful. We are looking to send out this date and plans within the next week or so that parents, guardians, students, and staff can plan accordingly.

Q: How is my school/district ensuring high-quality distance learning?

A: The state has clearly outlined how all schools should ensure high-quality distance education.

This includes:

- Access to devices & connectivity for all kids
- Daily live interaction with teachers and other students
- Challenging assignments equivalent to in-person classes

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- Adapted lessons and/or additional support for English language learners and special education students

Q: Will the district be able to provide families with supervision or other accommodations for working parents?

A: We are currently looking into all the possibilities for daily supervision that follow all safety guidelines and protocols. We know this information is critical, so decisions will be made about this as quickly as possible and then communicated to families so that everyone can plan accordingly.

Q: Will school lunches still be provided and/or available for students and families in need?

A: FUSD is working with our meals provider to create a schedule for meal pick up during the week, even though our students will be distance learning, for our students that receive free or reduced breakfast and lunch or any family that needs meal support during this difficult time. More information about this schedule is forthcoming as soon as we confirm with our vendor and staff.

Q: Will my child need to wear a mask to school under the new policy, once in-person learning resumes?

A: All children who are in third grade and higher are required to wear a mask unless they are medically exempt. Children between age 2 and second grade are strongly encouraged but not required to wear a mask. They can also wear a face shield.

Q: Will the school provide a mask for my child once in-person learning resumes?

Each school will have a supply of child-sized masks for any student who needs one or forgot to bring a mask. However, we encourage you to get some masks for your child as part of their back to school supplies. Getting masks in a design that your child likes can make it easier for them to wear the mask.

Q: Once in-person learning resumes, will students have to stay six feet apart?

A: The state guidelines say that children should remain six feet apart where possible, but recognize that this may be hard to strictly enforce. Adults are asked to stay six feet apart from other adults and children.

Q: Will school staff and students need to be tested for COVID-19 once school campuses reopen?

A: According to the state, school districts and schools shall test staff periodically, *as testing capacity permits and as practicable*. Examples of recommended frequency include testing all staff over two

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months, where 25% of staff are tested every two weeks, or 50% every month to rotate testing of all staff over time. The guidance does not require testing for children. We are working with the Sonoma County Office of Education and the Sonoma County Health Department to determine how testing will be conducted.

Q: Once schools reopen, will they need to close again if there is a confirmed case among a student or staff member?

A. The new state guidance clearly outlines what should happen if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 on a campus, which is outlined in the chart below. In each case, the school district will work closely with the Sonoma County Department of Health Service’s contact tracing team.

Confirmed COVID-19 Case:

Classroom	School	District
Close class if one or more children/employees have a confirmed case	Close school if multiple classes OR 5% of total student/staff population have confirmed cases	Close if 25% of all schools are closed due to COVID-19

Please note that because we are a one school district, we fall under the School guidelines for closing. Which means the site and district will need to be closed if multiple classes OR 5% of our total student/staff population have confirmed cases.

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