

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN ADVANCE OF A CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

PREVENTION

To help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including the flu and coronavirus, follow these important guidelines:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Individuals with chronic health issues and/or individuals experiencing severe symptoms should be evaluated by a medical professional.
- Get vaccinated every year.

The CDC outlines additional [preventive measures](#) on their website.

SDCOE has developed the following guidelines for schools that are available on the [SDCOE nursing website](#). They are updated regularly in collaboration with county public health officials.

- All children and staff members with fever ($>100.4\text{ F} / >38\text{C}$) should remain home (from school and other activities) until they had no fever for 24 hours, without fever medication.
- Students should not be excluded from school or any school activities based on race, country of origin, or recent travel.
- If a student or staff member who has been to China within the past 14 days presents at school with fever and symptoms of either cough or shortness of breath, then a site nurse or health technician will:
 - Until the person leaves school, place a surgical mask on that student or staff member if it is tolerated. If possible, keep that person isolated (students must still be visible and

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- supervised by a staff member); otherwise try to keep a 3-foot or more distance between student and others.
- Contact student's parent/guardian and advise them to follow up with their doctor.
- Suspected cases of CoVid-19 should be reported by telephone to the San Diego County Epidemiology Unit immediately at 619-692-8499 during business hours or at 858-565-5255 after hours, on weekends, or holidays.
- It's suggested that any disease notification letters sent from school to the school community be done in consultation with the Public Health Department. If you have questions about this step,
- please contact SDCOE School Nursing Program Specialist Corinne McCarthy at corinne.mccarthy@sdcoe.net.

PREPAREDNESS

- Each school site should designate a location where students that develop a fever during the school day will be monitored.
- Districts should consider obtaining proper protective gear for nurses or health technicians who may come into contact with potentially sick students.
- Districts should identify a district-level point of contact for coronavirus efforts who can serve as a liaison to county health officials, if needed.
- Create an influenza pandemic plan for COVID-19. This [Infectious Disease and Pandemic Response Plan from the Mountain View Whisman School District](#) is an excellent resource. *SDCOE is beginning work on a plan template for San Diego County schools.*
- Develop or update social distancing policy. In a pandemic, the risk of getting the flu is greatest when one has close contact with an infected person. Social distancing measures such as school closure, telecommuting or staggered shifts for the workforce, and cancellation of public gatherings may be effective in reducing transmission risks. *This will be part of SDCOE's plan template.*
- Explore options for class online/from home to support social distancing and short- or long-term school closure.
- Develop or update policies on absenteeism for students and faculty.
- Develop or update policies on sick leave for faculty.
- Examine food services and food preparation protocols in the event a school with a central kitchen is closed.
- Encourage parents to update their contact information so that schools and districts can communicate effectively.
- Review/update your crisis communications plan to ensure communication flow

The [CDC's School District Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist](#) is a great resource.

RESPONSE

SDCOE's program specialist for nursing is in constant communication with school nurses and county health officials. If there is a case of coronavirus in San Diego County that impacts schools or students, public health officials will advise school officials on the proper protocol based on the situation and information available at the time of the outbreak.

In the worst-case scenario, a school may be closed. The decision to close a school would be made by local public health officials or superintendent (or designee) in collaboration with public health officials. In this case, you would follow your emergency response plan for school closures.

RECOVERY

Waiver of Attendance for Emergency Conditions: If your district or a school in your district closes due to a public health emergency, you may apply for a [Waiver of Attendance for Emergency Conditions](#). Please send the completed form to our office for county superintendent approval and certification; the documentation then goes to the state for approval.