

SCHOOL YEAR PLANNING:

A GUIDE TO ADDRESS THE
CHALLENGES OF COVID-19



HOPE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
EVERY CHILD, EVERY OPPORTUNITY, EVERY DAY

UPDATED: SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT/PRINCIPAL

The Hope Elementary School District in collaboration with the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency and the Tulare County Office of Education are fully committed to working together to prepare for the reopening of our school.

As COVID-19 continues to change our world, we have been working together to obtain resources, share best practices, and advocate for regulatory flexibility in how we deliver the best instructional possible amidst this global pandemic.

There is no one-size fits all approach to reopening schools in our county and across the state of California. Based on available information as of July 1, 2020, the Hope Elementary School District will create contingency plans for reopening school based on the guiding principles, current planning considerations based on parent feedback, and assumptions set forth in this document. The plans are subject to change as public health guidelines are updated.

Special thanks to Hope Staff, parents, our board members, and the community for helping us develop these guidelines to best serve students moving forward.

Sincerely,

Melanie Matta

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WHAT FAMILIES CAN EXPECT WHEN SCHOOLS REOPEN

The health and safety of our students, staff, and families is of the utmost importance. When the 2020-2021 school year begins, on-campus school will look much different than what we have been traditionally used to due to the new health and safety measures. Each district in our county and counties throughout the State of California will be developing plans to reopen schools based on the guidance from public health officials and state agencies. Our district will update its plans as the situation evolves.

We are very proud of the fact that 85% of our students took advantage of the distance learning that took place last school year. While we didn't have much control over the fact that 15% of our students didn't engage in the work, we are making plans to enhance student performance and address learning loss. At the same time, our district will also try it's best to maintain extracurricular programs that are very important to the physical, mental, and social well-being of our students.

WHEN SCHOOLS RESUME IN THE FALL, THEY WILL LOOK DIFFERENT. HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT:

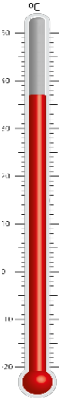
Hope school will reopen with a continuum of options that include on-campus and remote learning.

The following health and safety guidance has been recommended by the Tulare County HHSA for the reopening of schools based on current information and will be updates as the situation changes.

SCREENING AT HOME

Families are recommended to take temperatures **DAILY** before going to school. Anyone with a fever of **100.4 or higher should not go to a school site.**

Students and adults should also screen themselves for respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath prior to coming to school each day. Students and adults experiencing those symptoms should not attend school and call the office to let us know.



ARRIVING AT SCHOOL



- * Staff will be wearing face coverings
- * The bus will carry fewer students
- * Parents and visitors may have limited access to the school campus.
- * Students will be socially distanced for breakfast and then report to their class.

REOPENING SCHOOL GUIDELINES AS OF SEPTEMBER 2020

Hope School can reopen in person when: Tulare County has been moved from the purple tier to the red tier **and** has been so for 14 consecutive days.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

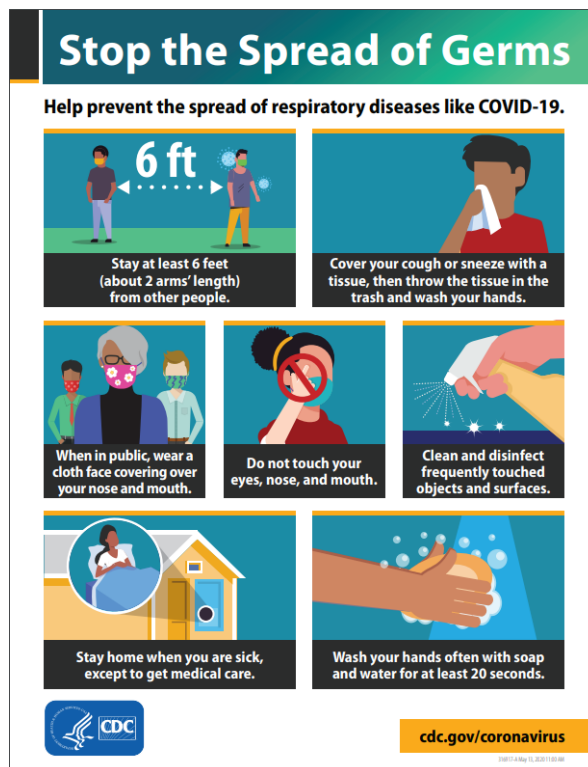
State recommendations schools are asked to follow as they reopen:

- *Staff testing every 2 months
- *Staff required to wear face coverings
- *Face coverings for students: Grades TK-2 is recommended. Grades 3-8 is required.
- *Students **not** willing to wear a face covering while at school will be enrolled in and receive instruction through distance learning.
- *Students and staff will maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet.

CLOSING SCHOOL:

Because we are a single school site: The entire school must close if:

- *There is a 5% or more positivity rate. A mandatory 14 day quarantine will be in effect. Learning will continue through the distance learning platform.



GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS THROUGHOUT THE DAY



- Hope School will follow disinfection guidelines developed by the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency and the California Department of Health. This will include all classroom, workspaces, outdoor spaces, and the playground.
- Physical barriers may be installed where social distancing is not possible.
- All students and staff will be encouraged to wash/clean their hands regularly.
- In addition to the soap and water station in the classroom, there will be hand sanitizer available.
- We will limit sharing of supplies between students and disinfect between uses if sharing is unavoidable.

OTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Face coverings must be worn by staff and students, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.
- Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, with the exception of those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid, or food service.

ON CAMPUS AND IN THE CLASSROOM



Social distancing will help limit the spread of the virus. Schools will consider the following strategies to maintain smaller groups of students in shared spaces:



- Modify school schedules
- Limit visitors on campus
- Keep students in smaller groups
- Serve meals in small group settings
- Space desks further apart to ensure a minimum of 6 feet distance between students
- Serve individually plated or boxed meals
- Where possible, keep student cohorts from mixing



- Stagger lunches, recesses, and other transition times
- Do not host large gatherings such as assemblies and dances
- When feasible, identify a sick room for students who are not feeling well to minimize contact with others until they are able to go home



BECAUSE OF THE NEED FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING, EVERY CHILD CANNOT BE ON CAMPUS AT THE SAME TIME

Quality instruction and a commitment to equity for ALL students to be at the forefront of all the decisions we make. These decisions are based on state policy, local community feedback, and available resources. In order to maintain social distancing, Hope School will utilize a combination of on-campus instruction and distance learning. Some examples may include smaller class sizes to accommodate the 6-feet apart guideline where students attend classes for a portion of the week and/or reduced hours per day. Additionally, schedules may change throughout the year depending on additional information and/or a community outbreak.

At any given time, Hope School will be required to modify the schedule to limit the number of students on campus. Some examples of schedule may include:

Smaller Cohorts/Student Groups:
Classes can be divided into smaller cohorts/student groups (ex: one group may come to school on Monday and Wednesday, the other group on Tuesday and Thursday or any combination of two days per group. The fifth day could be flexible based on school site plans.

Half Day Schedule (AM/PM):
The school offers double sessions where half of the students attend class in the morning and the other half attend in the afternoon.

Distance Learning:
Teachers would be on campus to deliver distance learning to students via the district approved online platforms (Zoom, Google Classroom, Flipgrid, Seesaw)

To address childcare needs, community partnerships will be explored to offer expanded learning programs to support families. Hope School will still be offering CHOICES After School Program from 2:45-6:00 p.m.

Hope School will work with students and families to ensure equity and access to quality instruction.

Accommodations for students with disabilities, students with diverse learning needs, students who are medically vulnerable, and English learners will be made as needed.



ATTENDING TO THE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF OUR STUDENTS WILL BE A PRIORITY AS THEY RETURN TO SCHOOL



The Hope School Staff is committed to supporting students' Social-emotional wellness and offering resources to ensure students transition back to school smoothly. Support may include emotional learning, building relationships, community building activities, and increased access to mental health and wellness services. We will work together with our families to check in on how students are feeling and assess their individual needs to provide the right support during these challenging times.

IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING, ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE STUDENTS TO CONGREGATE WILL BE LIMITED AND MODIFIED AS GUIDELINES CHANGE

Social Distancing is important to ensure the health and safety of our students and will impacts how some classes will be taught and which sports and extracurricular activities students will be able to participate in safely.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities

As of June 10, 2020, the recommended health and safety guidance currently prohibits team or close contact sport play. As the school year approaches, further guidance will likely be forthcoming from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), California Department of Education (CDE), and local health authorities.



Field Trips

Field trips are not currently recommended. We have scheduled Scicon for our 6th grade students for later in the school year to have the best chance of being able to attend.



The Tulare County Office of Education, Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency, and local school districts are committed to ensuring the health and safety of all students. Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency will continue to closely monitor the rate of infection in Tulare County. As public health guidelines change, the local districts and schools will adapt and modify plans. We will work together with our students and families to keep our children safe as we transition to our new approach to educating students.

FAMILY RESOURCES

Check out www.tcoe.org website for resources available.

- Enrichment Learning Resources
- Social Emotional Wellness
- Math homework hotline



PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The health and safety of our students, employees, families, and community is of the utmost importance.

As part of that shared commitment, Hope Elementary School District as well as all other local school districts are closely monitoring the on-going developments regarding COVID-19 in partnership with Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency and the California Department of Public Health. As we work in partnership, we are clear that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to reopening schools. Districts will need to adapt to the evolving guidance from health officials and implement plans with strategies best tailored to local needs. Strategies will need to be adaptive and flexible to be scaled up or down depending on local conditions during this process. Planning for reopening schools creates the opportunity to strengthen partnerships and our commitment to work together as a community with the shared goal of improving outcomes for all students.

As mentioned above, we are all monitoring the ongoing developments regarding COVID-19 and will continue to provide frequent updates to you.

We will start off the year with the AM/PM schedule and will monitor the implementation for the month of August. **If we have determined we can safely open up for all students**, we will make that determination by August 28th and will start school on August 31st on a normal schedule. Mrs. Matta will be in communication with the families if that decision is made. If you do not feel comfortable sending your child to a full return at that time, please let us know and we will set up the distance learning plan for them.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **QUALITY INSTRUCTION** – Whether distance learning or in person, quality instruction continues to be the key to the success of educational programs since coursework delivered through hybrid modalities must continue to be available (on-campus and distance learning) and should meet the same standards as coursework offered only on-campus. We will need to give educators “space and grace” as they work to improve the delivery of content through multiple modalities.
2. **COMMIT TO EQUITY** – All students must have opportunities to achieve academic success that are accessible, personalized, culturally relevant, and responsive. Schools have a responsibility to be culturally and linguistically responsive and meet the continued needs of ALL students, including students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, foster youth, English learners, and students from diverse cultures.
3. **ADOPT WHOLE SCHOOL WELLNESS APPROACH**- Take a systems approach to promoting student academic, social and emotional learning, and physical well-being. Adopt a whole school wellness approach to ensure student success in school and community.
4. **PARTNER WITH STUDENTS, FAMILIES, COMMUNITY, AND LABOR GROUPS** - Engage with students, families, community partners, and labor groups to build collective impact and support public health. Maximize the resources of the entire community, including health care, expanded learning, early learning, family and community partnerships to implement health and safety protocols and to advance alternative learning modalities.
5. **LEARN AND IMPROVE**– Adopt continuous improvement practices and use evidence to guide decision making while aiming to enhance the quality of students learning opportunities. Use data to inform improvement of instructional and school practices. Work together, leverage our collective positive effect through advocacy and share best practices and resources. To maximize impact, Hope ESD, TCOE, and other county Superintendents to collaborate and share best practices among districts.



SECTION 1: HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

What are the latest guidelines from the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency?

SCHOOL CAMPUS PROCEDURES

Screening and Testing:

- **Will students and adults entering campuses be screened for symptoms?**

Schools may implement screening measures for students and adults entering campus. We recommend asking families to take temperatures each morning prior to coming to school. Anyone with a fever of 100.4 or higher should not come to campus. Students and adults should also screen themselves for respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath prior to coming to school each day. Students and adults experiencing those symptoms should not attend school.

- **Is the protocol for testing children different than adults? How available will it be?**

The process for testing children and adults are the same.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **Will students and adults wear face coverings?**

Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school. Face coverings **must** be worn by staff and students, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently. This means that when a student is not sitting at their desk (which are distanced 6 feet apart), they must wear their face covering. If there is a medical reason why a student cannot wear a face covering, please call the office.

- **What supplies are needed (e.g., face coverings, thermometers, personal protective equipment)?**

If social distancing is unattainable and face coverings are needed, it is recommended that schools provide face coverings for students and staff who are unable to provide their own. Schools should have a temporal or other external thermometer to detect fever in students or staff who become ill after arriving at school. Hand washing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer should be made

available in classrooms and other areas where staff/students are likely to be present. Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, with the exception of those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid, or food service.

- **What supplies should be included in every classroom and general area (e.g., office, cafeteria, bathroom) for use by students and employees?**

All sinks should have soap. Handwashing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer should be available in classrooms or other commonly used areas. Face coverings should be worn by staff and students and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

- **Are gloves recommended for students and adults?**

Gloves are not recommended for use by students or staff, with the exception of those conducting duties such as cleaning, first aid, or food service.

Social Distancing

- **What are the social distancing protocols in multiple settings: classroom, hallways, common outdoor spaces?**

Depending on grade level, physical space, and class sizes, school should consider the

following strategies where possible and appropriate:

- *Keep students in small group 6 feet apart
- *Serve meals in smaller groups or in their classrooms
- *Stagger lunches, recesses, and other breaks to maintain smaller groups of students in shared spaces
- *Individually plate or box lunches
- *Space desks further apart and orient desks so students are not facing each other
- *Utilize larger classroom for larger class sizes
- *Keep student cohorts together and limit inter-mixing between different students
- *Do not host larger gatherings such as assemblies
- *Space students out on busses

- * **Do schools need to close or limit access to common outdoor spaces?**

Common outdoor spaces may present less risk of transmission than indoor spaces, assuming students and adults maintain distancing. Schools may consider staggering recesses and/or outdoor time so that smaller groups are using shared spaces at one time. When using outdoor spaces, cohorts should be maintained whenever possible.

- * **What are the recommendations to configure the campus to include a space to isolate emergent cases?**

A sick room (or tent when no such room is available) will be available for symptomatic individuals to remain in until they are picked up to go home.

At Hope, there will be a tent set up for a student showing symptoms of being ill. The student will be made comfortable in the medical tent until a parent arrives to pick up the child.

Transportation

- **What safety measures will need to be in place for bus drivers and students**

To lower the risk of exposure, Hope School District will implement the following”

- Bus driver will be wearing face coverings.
- Students will be required to wear a face covering on the bus at all times.
- Hand sanitizer may be available for students when getting on or off the bus.
- When possible, space students out.
- Windows may be open for better ventilation.
- Siblings will be encouraged to sit together.
- Physical distancing when getting on/off the bus will be required.

REPORTING/HEALTH PROTOCOLS

- **What is the protocol for handling students or staff exhibiting symptoms?**

Students or staff who are symptomatic should NOT come to school and call the school to inform them as soon as possible. If students or staff begin to exhibit symptoms after arriving at school, we will separate the individual from

others as much as possible and make arrangements for the individual to go home as soon as possible. Students will be sent to the sick room/tent to wait on family to pick them up. Staff will be sent home.

- **What are the communication guidelines when a positive case is confirmed?**

Communication recommendations will vary depending on the specific circumstances of a case in a school community. At a minimum, the affected cohort will need to be notified. Letters and phone calls will be made to the affected families.

- **Will staff or students diagnosed with COVID-19 need a document to return to school?**

Guidelines for determining when a COVID-19 infected person is able to return to school or work continues to evolve as we learn more about COVID-19. Tulare County Public Health Department will provide specific guidance on this as the school year commences. If needed, TCHHSA can provide a clearance letter for return to school.

- **If a parent is diagnosed with COVID=19, will their student need to self-isolate 14 days prior to returning to school? How will the school know when the student is ok to return?**

If a student or staff has a household member that tests positive for COVID-19, the student/staff will be required to quarantine at home for 14 days. The student will be placed in distance learning.

HEALTH EDUCATION

What are the recommended health education topics schools will provide?

Schools will educate all students and staff on the importance of hygiene, understanding and monitoring for symptoms of illness, social distancing, and mental health sources of support. Administration will train all staff in sanitization techniques. TCOE Nurse Ana Borba will also spend time with the staff prior to the beginning of the school year to train on a variety of different health topics.

FACILITIES – SAFETY AND SANITATION CONSIDERATIONS

- **What supplies should be included in every classroom and general area for use by students and employees?**

All sinks will have soap. Handwashing stations with soap and/or hand sanitizer will be made available in every classroom, bathroom, office, and cafeteria.

- **Where might physical barriers need to be installed to ensure student and employee safety?**

Hope School is in the process of installing clear plexi-glass barriers at the front counter of the office and anywhere else social distancing is not possible. Because many items are on backorder, we may not have them at the start

of school but they will be installed when items arrive.

- **Will extensive classroom cleaning need to be performed if a student or teacher is diagnosed with COVID-19? What are the guidelines for this?**

Yes. The district will deep clean and sanitize classroom where there is found to be a case of COVID-19. In addition, between AM/PM sessions, each classroom and public space will be sanitized.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- **Limit sharing of supplies between students and disinfect between uses if sharing is unavoidable**
- **No field trips until further notice**
- **Limit events to those where social distancing can be maintained**
- **Limit/restrict visitors to campus**
- **Limitations/elimination of extra-curricular activities/sports**
- **Be prepared for the possibility of additional closures after campus reopens if outbreaks occurs**
- **Staff use face shields so students can see them instructing**

