A Strategic Plan for Reopening Schools

2020-2021

Doing our part to help students, families, staff and our community move forward together

Release Date:
July 31, 2020

Fresno Unified School District

2309 Tulare St., Fresno, CA 93721 • (559) 457-3000 • fresnounified.org

Open Letter from Superintendent Nelson

Bob Nelson
Fresno Unified Superintendent

July 31, 2020

Opening schools this year will look different than any other time in our district's history. As much as we all desire to be back on campuses, the safety of our students, staff and families is of the utmost importance and at this time it is just not safe enough to come back together in person.

We will begin the 2020-2021 school year in a 100% online learning model through at least the first quarter of learning and will only be able to plan for a return to campus when Fresno County has been off of the state's monitoring list for more than 14 consecutive days.

While online learning is not our optimal mode of education, our teams have worked tirelessly to provide a high-quality learning model providing supports to all our students. This model of "eLearn at My School" will look nothing like the online, self-paced, learning our students and families experienced from mid-March through the end of the last school year. This model includes live daily instruction from your child's teacher(s), opportunities for collaboration amongst students, and individualized supports for students.

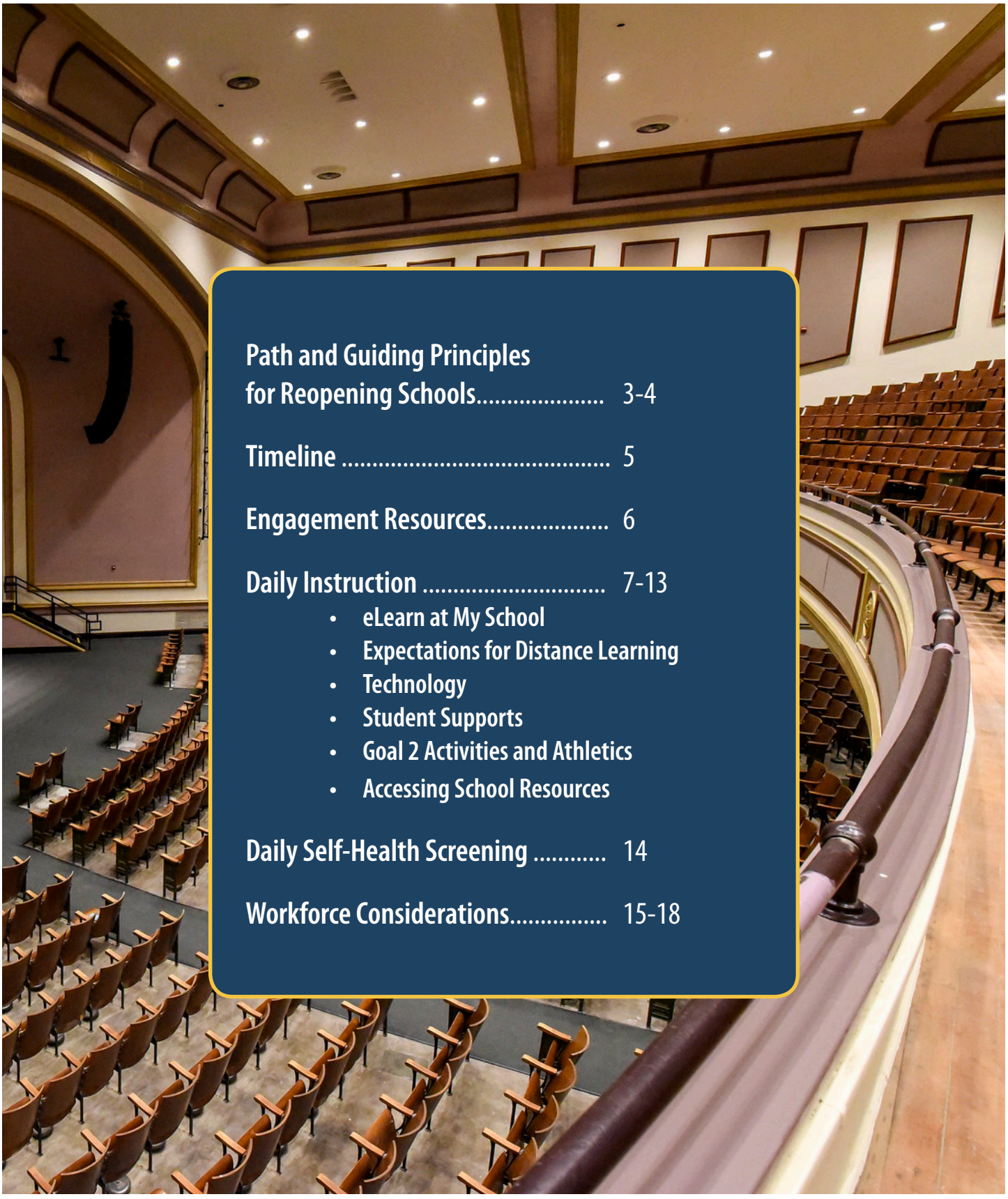
This strategic plan for reopening schools includes many more details regarding online learning as well as what campuses will look like when we are able to return to on-campus learning.

We all play a role in creating a safe environment for our students and staff to return to campuses. When that happens, our plans include layers of safety practices, acknowledging that while each practice on its own is imperfect, together they can provide a solid foundation of protection for our students, staff, and families. For example, our recommendations include:

- Physical distancing of six feet, or as close to six feet as feasible
- Masks to be worn when physical distancing of six feet is not possible
- Limiting visitors on campus
- Keeping students within smaller cohorts as feasible
- Robust contact tracing of suspected or confirmed COVID cases
- Isolation rooms for any students who may present during school with COVID symptoms
- Providing staggered lunches and schedules to allow for physical distancing
- Utilizing outdoor spaces for meals as feasible
- Increasing access to handwashing and hand sanitizer for all
- Daily self-health screenings for all students, staff and essential visitors
- Staying home when you are sick
- Virtual staff meetings when physical distancing is not possible
- One-way hallway traffic flows
- And recurring video and in-person training and reinforcement of all safety practices, including proper handwashing, proper mask wearing, and more.

We recognize this is not what any of us dreamed of for the 2020-2021 school year, but I challenge all of us to set the tone for our students to have a positive and engaging school year no matter the circumstances. No one believes this year will not be difficult, but Fresno Unified Family, WE CAN DO HARD THINGS.

Table of Contents



Path and Guiding Principles for Reopening Schools..... 3-4

Timeline 5

Engagement Resources..... 6

Daily Instruction 7-13

- eLearn at My School
- Expectations for Distance Learning
- Technology
- Student Supports
- Goal 2 Activities and Athletics
- Accessing School Resources

Daily Self-Health Screening 14

Workforce Considerations..... 15-18

Path and Guiding Principles for Reopening Schools

Our Path to Reopening: School will Start 100% Online

Recognizing the importance of high-quality instruction for all of our 74,000 students, Fresno Unified planned to reopen schools on August 17, 2020 providing families with two paths – traditional on-campus instruction or online learning from home.

In June, Fresno Unified surveyed parents, students and employees about returning to school and the path they preferred. Survey data indicated that approximately 75% of those who responded preferred to return to traditional face-to-face school with health and safety guidelines in place. Twenty-five percent of respondents indicated they preferred to continue distance learning.

However, on July 17, with increased state and county COVID-19 cases and an order from the governor's office, Fresno Unified announced it would begin the school year fully online. When deemed safe by local health officials and the state – meaning Fresno County is off the state's watch list for 14 consecutive days – Fresno Unified will transition back to traditional on-campus instruction. We expect to provide families the option of either continuing online instruction from home for the remainder of the school year or returning to the classroom with added safety practices.

Online Instruction from Home

- Available to all students
- Daily instruction with a teacher
- Designated time for individualized student support
- Online student collaboration experiences
- 24/7 access to district curriculum

Traditional On-Campus Instruction with Added Safety Practices

- Student/staff self-health screening prior to arrival
- Physical distancing
- Required masks
- Frequent hand washing/sanitizing
- Increased daily cleaning/disinfecting

Path and Guiding Principles for Reopening Schools

Guiding Principles for Reopening

1. Deliver robust learning opportunities that address potential learning loss due to spring school closures while ensuring students continue to receive high quality instruction every day and just in time supports, and are college and career ready.
    a. Serve as a champion for equity while rethinking existing learning structures
    b. Provide resources for the social emotional and physical health of students/staff
    c. Provide individualized learning and supports

2. Keep families engaged. Produce clear communications in multiple languages using a wider range of platforms as students, parents and employees pivot and transition based on rapidly changing conditions facing our community.
    a. Focus on students and parent partnerships
    b. Provide excellent customer care

3. Provide layers of safety practices that reduce the spread of COVID-19 and allow students to receive essential needs once back on campus. Layers include:
    a. Student, staff and essential visitors conduct daily self-health screening prior to arrival
    b. Physical distancing
    c. Hand hygiene
    d. Required masks based on CDC and CDPH guidelines
    e. Increased cleaning/disinfecting protocols

Timeline

2020

June 1
Conducted surveys outreach with parents, students and employees

June 17
Reopening plans presented to the Board of Education

June 18
District announced plans for reopening schools on August 17

Ongoing
Following Guiding Principles, sites and district offices develop site specific plans for reopening

July 17
Due to changing health conditions in Fresno County, district announced it would reopen schools fully online

July 22
Special Education Opening of Schools Virtual Presentation

Ongoing
Sites finalize plans and begin communicating site specific plans with their school communities

August 6
Virtual Town Hall

August 17
School begins online for all students

Engagement Resources

Fresno Unified prides itself on community outreach, using multiple platforms and messaging in English, Spanish and Hmong. To ensure parents do not miss important updates we encourage parents/guardians to update their contact information in the district's ATLAS Parent Portal found on the district's website at Fresnounified.org. Additional tools used to communicate with our Fresno Unified family include:

- ATLAS Connect (NEW)
- Building Futures online newspaper
- EduText daily grade and attendance updates
- Email
- Family Learning and Technology Support Center 457-3939
- Fresnounified.org
- Livestream Conversations (Through Teams and Ustream)
- Parent University learning sessions
- Peachjar electronic flyers
- Radio
- Rapid Alert emergency notifications
- School Messenger
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram)
- Television
- Videos

Daily Instruction

Online Instructional Model – eLearn at My School

Fresno Unified will begin the year by providing high quality instruction online to every student everyday through eLearn at My School. While learning online, students will maintain enrollment at their school site with instruction provided by their site teachers. Students will be engaged daily five days a week and all courses will be designed to fulfill standards and graduation requirements.

Online instruction will be created to:

- Deliver high-quality instruction
- Ensure the safety and wellness of students and staff
- Ensure equity regardless of the model of instruction
- Establish strong relationships and positive experiences with our students and families
- Provide the structure and support educators, students and families need for learning
- Optimize use of resources

Curriculum

Fresno Unified will utilize the district-adopted core curriculum from pre-K through grade 12. Remote learning will also include physical education, career technical education and elective courses. The majority of our district-adopted curricula have digital platforms that support engaging students in interactive lessons and digital assignments/assessments/projects. While the district-adopted curricula is the primary source, teachers have the flexibility to use additional sources to enhance student learning.

Fresno Adult School has several programs. Adult Education administration will decide the best online learning tools for their individual students, based on student needs and specialized programs.

Technology

To date, Fresno Unified has successfully deployed 60,000 devices to support students in their distance learning. Staff is continuing to reach out to the remaining students who have not picked up a device to ensure a smooth start of school. Based on multiple studies and national best practice districts, tablets are recommended for elementary students. Students in PK-3 will utilize a tablet, with third graders also receiving a keyboard. Students in grades 4-12 will utilize a laptop.

Fresno Unified students and parents needing technology support can contact the district's Family Learning and Technology Support Center during regular business hours at 457-3939.

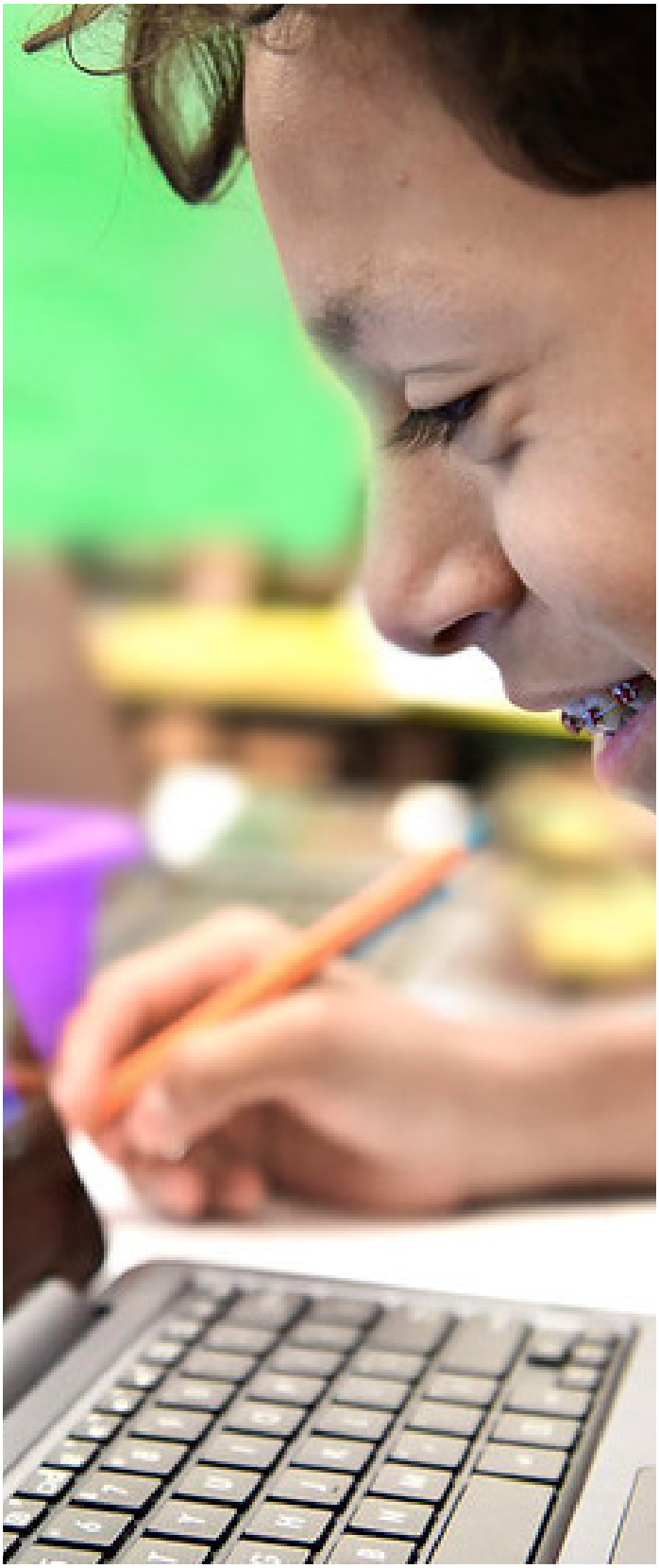
Daily Instruction

Microsoft Teams

The district's communications platform for teacher instruction is Microsoft Teams, a digital hub bringing teachers, content and students together in one space. Students and teachers will engage daily on grade level content utilizing Microsoft Teams. Teams has strong safeguards for protecting students' safety and privacy.

Student Safety During Online Learning

Students' health and well-being remain a top priority, especially when students are not physically present on campus. Much like the supports and safety practices provided when they are on campus, it's imperative those same resources are available to students in this new world of distance learning. As an added safety precaution, Fresno Unified has partnered with Gaggle to add additional safeguards while students are online using Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Office 365 email and OneDrive. Gaggle uses key phrases and technology to identify inappropriate language, bullying and harassment, inappropriate sexual content and even situations that might lead to self-harm. Gaggle service follows all state and federal laws protecting student privacy. Gaggle's staff review and, where appropriate, notify a school administrator to provide necessary supports. If a school administrator is unavailable, Gaggle will contact local public safety in life threatening situations. School administrators provide responsive supports for students' well-being and their continued growth.



Daily Instruction

Expectations and Roles for Supporting Distance Learning

Successful distance learning experiences for students will require all of us to work together. Here is a quick guide for the roles we each play:

Students:

- Participate actively in daily live interactive instruction via distance learning
- Contribute to building strong and supportive relationships with school staff and classmates
- Seek assistance from teacher(s) during office hours
- Know your usernames and passwords to access all digital resources
- Submit all assignments on time

Teachers/Staff:

- Ensure learning is ready to go by the first day of school via distance learning
- Create and maintain a positive classroom culture
- Observe regular office hours to provide support and feedback to parents and students
- Engage in professional learning opportunities provided by the district and school
- Actively engage in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process to plan instruction, assess student learning and monitor student achievement

Leaders:

- Provide customer care with all stakeholders (the school is the hub for information and resources)
- Facilitate community building activities, parent outreach and professional learning for staff
- Monitor the quality of instruction, social emotional learning and social emotional supports
- Ensure all staff are prepared for high quality distance learning
- Family hotline established at every school

Families:

- Log on and update contact information in the ATLAS Parent Portal
- Ensure that there is internet access and a mobile device at home for your student(s)
- Ensure that your student(s) know their usernames and passwords to access their instructional resources
- Engage your student(s) daily regarding their assignments
- Maintain regular communication with your student(s) teachers and counselor
- Request support and resources in home language from school site hotline
- Stay informed and updated on all school business by actively reading and listening to all school communications throughout the year via School Messenger, Peachjar, school social media, signage, and school website

Daily Instruction

Support call line, web link and schools

All Fresno Unified schools will have a "hot line" for parents to call for all school-based questions. In the event a message is left after hours, the call will be returned within the next business day. For a complete list of school site phone numbers, email addresses and websites, please visit fresnounified.org.

Training for Students and Families

Professional learning will be provided to our students and families in the use of technology and software needed for distance learning. Students will receive baseline technology, Wi-Fi access if needed, and training on Microsoft Teams. Parents will be offered specific learning sessions on the basic uses of Microsoft Teams, common student learning apps, and other basic components of distance learning. Sessions will be held in multiple languages. School leaders will hold weekly school site engagement sessions that provide updates on distance learning and will have a forum to ask school site leaders questions.

Meals

As we have since March, Fresno Unified will continue to provide student meals. Breakfast and lunch will be provided in the morning prior to daily online instruction. Sites are still being finalized and will be communicated to families prior to the start of school.

Special Support

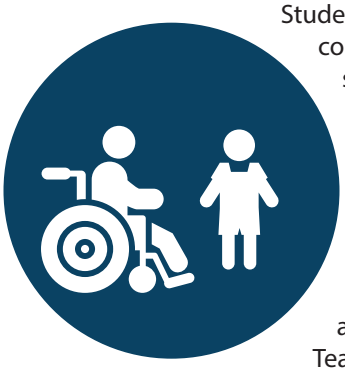
Supports for Special Populations

Students with exceptional needs, English learners and students in foster or homeless living situations will continue to be given special consideration to ensure appropriate instruction while complying with federal and state requirements.

Daily Instruction

Special Support

Students with Exceptional Needs



Students with exceptional needs will continue to receive services and supports to ensure they can make progress in the general education curriculum.

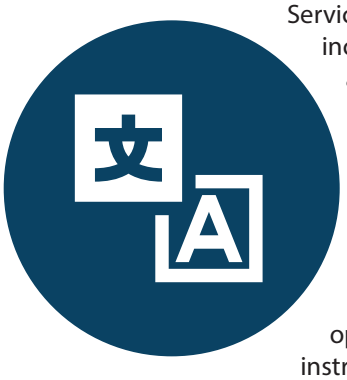
Students with exceptional needs will participate in daily, live instruction with teachers and peers and independent assignments and instruction. Teachers will maintain a record of instruction, participation, and assignments. Students will be expected to be available for instruction and special education services during regular school hours. A device and all materials required to meet a student's needs outlined in the IEP in the distance learning model will be provided.

Special education services, accommodations, modifications, and supports outlined in a student's IEP will be provided virtually during distance learning. Annual IEP goals and short-term objectives will continue to be implemented and monitored, and progress reports will be provided to families quarterly. If there is any aspect of a student's IEP that is not applicable to the distance learning model or will look different, notice will be provided to the family with more information.

IEP team meetings and assessments will continue to be held and completed within applicable timelines. Any IEPs or assessments that were due in spring 2020, but not completed during the school closure period, will also be completed. 504 plans will be in effect and students will continue to be allowed accommodations under those plans.

The Special Education Department will continue to be updated in order to provide the most current and pertinent information for families and staff. To learn more, visit the Special Education Department at Fresnounified.org.

English Learners (ELs)



Services for English learners will include a defined minimum time allocation for designated English language development (ELD) instruction, which will be included in the student's schedule, in addition to ongoing integrated ELD during the full instructional day. There will also be opportunities for extended instructional time provided to recently arrived ELs. Formative ELD assessments will be used to assist monitoring of student progress in development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Family outreach and education will be provided to support families' understanding of distance learning models and how to support their children's learning.

Foster and Homeless Students (Project ACCESS)

Services for students in foster care and homeless situations, including shelters and motels, will include social emotional and academic support as well as case management. The Project ACCESS office will work closely with Fresno County CPS and other community partners to support the unique needs of this special population. A team of Project ACCESS social workers will provide virtual emotional wellness checks and intake assessments on all foster and homeless students via telephone or a HIPPA compliant video platform. In addition to virtual individual and group counseling, social workers will also connect families with resources to address issues ranging from housing and food insecurity to domestic violence. Project ACCESS counselors will meet virtually with students in grades 8-12 and work closely with school site counselors to reduce academic barriers and promote student success. For more information, visit the Department of Prevention and Intervention at Fresnounified.org

Daily Instruction

Goal 2: Co-Curriculars/Athletics

On June 22, Fresno Unified reintroduced co-curriculars as part of a three tiered phased in approach, following health and safety guidelines. The first phase was a summer pilot program with high school co-curricular programs. Transitioning to future phases is determined by health conditions and in conjunction with the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) and local health officials. A waiver to participate in co-curriculars is required for all participants.

On July 20, CIF announced it would begin the 2020-2021 sports season with a modified schedule, delaying fall sports until December 2020 or January 2021. With this news, Fresno Unified teams will remain in conditioning status—phase 1. Goal 2, in conjunction with the district's Health Services Department and Fresno County Department of Public Health, will continue to assess health conditions and make future determinations regarding the district's co-curricular phased in approach (see graphic).

Under the current conditions, all other Goal 2 activities and instruction, including art, music, dance, and field trips, will be done virtually.

Fresno Unified School District

ATHLETICS AND CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS RESTARTING

Starting June 22, 2020, district athletic and co-curricular participants will begin reengaging in conditioning activities (outside of weight rooms and pools) following newly developed health and safety guidelines. The three-tiered phased in approach begins with a maximum of 10 participants grouped per coach/director adhering to physical distancing at a minimum of 6 feet between students. Additional safety guidelines have been established to ensure student/staff safety including self-screenings, time limits, encouraging masks and cleaning protocols. Transitioning into phase 2 and 3 will be determined in the near future based on guidance regarding season start dates from California Scholastic Federation (CIF) and health recommendations from the Fresno County Department of Public Health.

PHASE 1 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Summer outdoor conditioning only
- Pods of no more than 10 students at a time led by coach/director to ensure physical distancing
- 90 minute sessions with staggered arrival times
- Daily health screening required for student/staff prior to the start of conditioning
- Participants must bring their own water and towels
- No locker room, weight room, classrooms or pool access
- Hand hygiene before and after conditioning
- Masks encouraged when not participating in high intensity workouts
- Spectators not permitted

PHASE 2 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Pods of no more than 10 students at a time inside led by coach/director to ensure physical distancing (smaller pods for weight lifting)
- Up to 50 individuals may gather outdoors for workouts if physical distancing can be maintained
- Staggered arrival times
- Daily health screening required for student/staff prior to the start of conditioning
- Participants must bring their own water and towels
- Weight rooms can be used. Equipment wiped down after each use and spotters stand to the side (small pods of under 10 students at one time in weight room)
- Modified practices can begin for moderate risk sports (does not include football, competition cheer or wrestling)
- Athletic equipment including balls, batting helmets and catchers gear should be cleaned between each use
- Hand hygiene before and after conditioning/practicing
- Masks encouraged when not participating in high intensity workouts/hold virtual team meetings
- Spectators not permitted

PHASE 3 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Up to 50 individuals may gather indoors or outdoors continuing to practice physical distancing
- Daily health screening required for student/staff prior to the start of competition or practice
- Hand hygiene before and after competition or practice
- Athletic equipment including balls, batting helmets and catchers gear should be cleaned between each use. Other equipment, such as wrestling ear guards, football helmets, pads, eyewear should not be shared
- Participants must bring their own water and towels
- Moderate risk sports (not football, competition cheer and wrestling) practices and competitions can begin
- Modified practices can begin for high risk sports (football, competition cheer and wrestling)
- Masks encouraged when not participating in high intensity workouts

Prior to participating, a COVID-19 Liability of Risk form must be competed

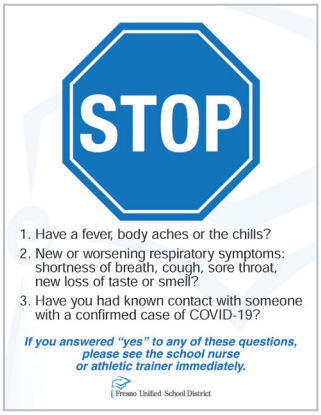
For updated information visit fresnounified.org or call 457-3395

Daily Instruction

Accessing School Resources while Campuses are Closed

While campuses won't be bustling with the traditional daily activities, we do realize there may be situations where a student or parent may need to come to campus to pick up supplies or seek support from staff. To ensure safety practices and reduce exposure, advance appointments are strongly encouraged to ensure physical distancing. While on campus or in a district office, for your safety and that of our entire Fresno Unified family, please follow designated signage.

All visitors need to conduct the self-health screening tool prior to arrival. If an individual answers yes to any of the screening questions below, they should stay home and NOT visit a Fresno Unified campus or building.



Daily Self-Health Screening

Every day before leaving home, students, staff and essential visitors need to conduct a daily self-health screening, asking themselves:

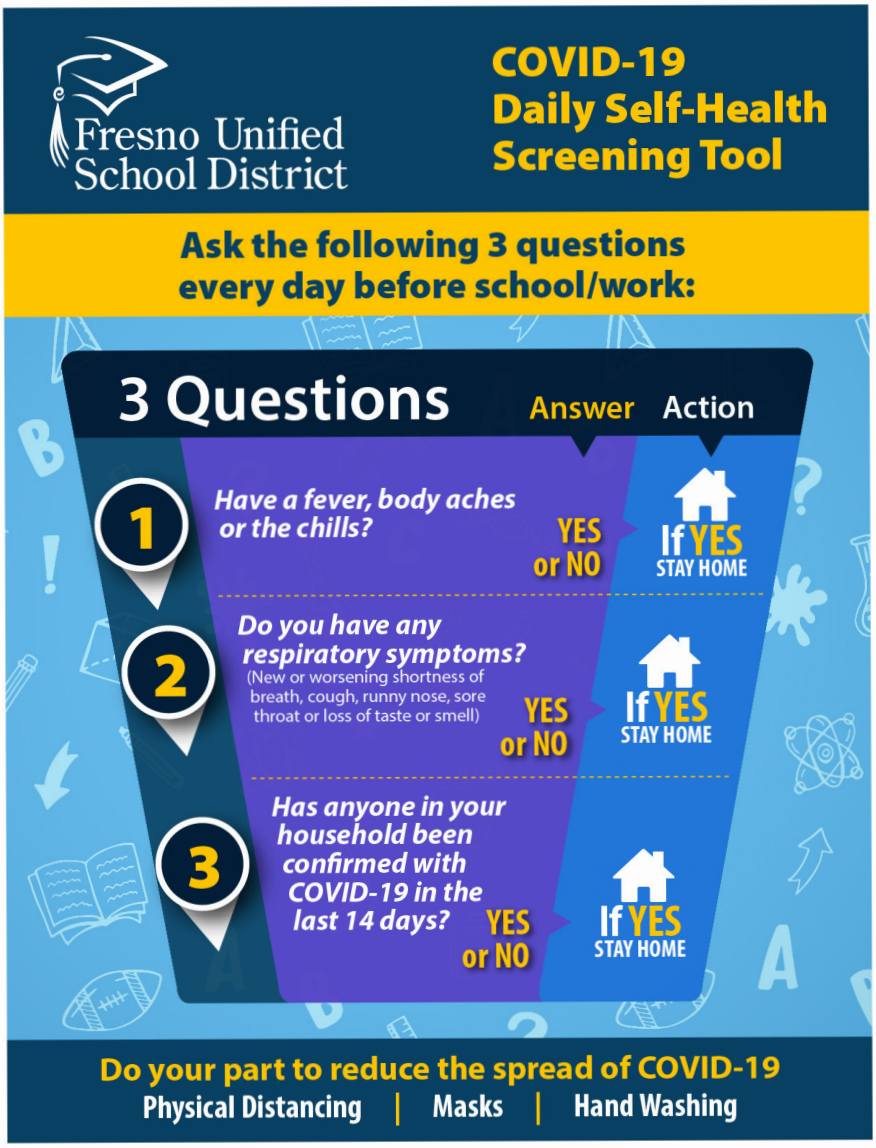
1. Do I or a member of my household have a fever, body aches or the chills?

2. Do I or a member of my household have new or worsening respiratory symptoms: shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell?

3. Has anyone in my household been confirmed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

If a student, employee or essential visitor answers "yes" to any of the above questions, they should:

- Remain home -- **DO NOT** go to school or work
- **DO** notify your child's school/employee's department supervisor
- **DO** contact your health care provider for guidance before returning



Symptoms **DO NOT** always mean COVID-19, so to reduce rumors and unnecessary concern with classmates/coworkers, we encourage parents, students and employees to keep their personal health conditions confidential until symptoms have been confirmed by medical testing and/or medical professionals.

Workforce Considerations

Fresno Unified is committed to ensuring our employees are informed and supported during these challenging times. We recognize local health and safety concerns may fluctuate, and we will respond and communicate accordingly. As we look to reopen schools in August, Fresno Unified is developing plans in conjunction with local, state and federal guidelines, including the following policies and procedures.

Unprecedented times call for new ways of working and responsibilities, and require reviewing, revising and adding new procedures.

Health and Safety Guidelines:

The district has enhanced safety and cleaning protocols to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Those protocols include but are not limited to:

- Physical distancing of six feet or as much as possible
- Limit the number of people at one time in breakrooms, restrooms and elevators
  - > Take the stairs when possible
  - > Reduce common area seating in lobbies/ waiting areas
  - > Hold virtual staff meetings and professional learning
  - > Don't linger or gather in hallways
- Frequent hand hygiene and reduce items shared amongst staff members
- Requiring all staff, students and visitors wear masks based on CDC and CDPH guidelines
- Increased cleaning/disinfecting protocols
- Student, staff and essential visitors conduct the daily self-health screening prior to arrival. If you are sick, stay home, do not report to work
- Signs posted at main entrance doors and in hallways to serve as health and safety reminders

According to the CDC, everyone is at risk for getting COVID-19 if they are exposed to the virus, but some people are more likely to become severely ill, which means they may require hospitalization, intensive care, a ventilator, or they may even die. Among adults, the risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk. People of any age with certain underlying medical conditions are also at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Workforce Considerations

Attendance, Leave and Accommodating Policies:

As outlined in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Leaves: Emergency Paid Sick Leave – Self Care, there are options available for an employee who becomes sick, must self-isolate for 14 days or care for a family member who becomes sick. This emergency paid sick leave is available through December 31, 2020.

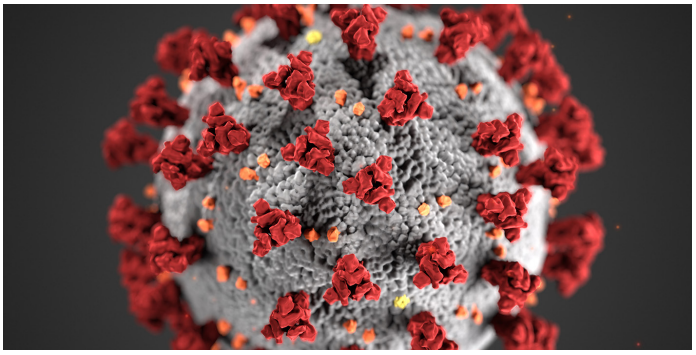
Each case is unique so should employees have questions regarding their specific options, please contact the **HR Leaves Desk: hrleavesdesk@fresnounified.org**

CRITERIA FOR RETURN TO WORK/ SCHOOL AFTER FEVER **(NOT RELATED TO COVID-19)**

Per the Fresno County Department of Public Health, students and staff may return to work/school as soon as the following criteria is met:

- At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement of symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal issues or other signs and symptoms of illness)

Workforce Considerations



CRITERIA FOR RETURN TO WORK/ SCHOOL AFTER **CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST**

Per the Fresno County Department of Public Health, students and staff may return to work/school after a positive COVID-19 test, as soon as the following criteria is met below:

COVID-19 Illness and Quarantine Guidelines

In cases A, B or C, please inform Jane Banks, RN | Health Services at jane.banks@fresnounified.org

PERSON A

Any person who has tested positive for COVID-19. Confirmed with lab result.
(notify close contacts)

With symptoms:

Isolation until the following requirements have been met:

- ✓ 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- ✓ 24 hours* (1 day) with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine) **and**
- ✓ Symptoms have improved

*The 24 hours without fever may possibly occur within the 10 days of isolation, or after the 10 days

Without symptoms (asymptomatic):

Isolate for 10 days from test date:

- ✓ Monitor self for symptoms, take temperature twice a day
- ✓ Released from isolation after 10 days have passed as long as no symptoms have been present

PERSON B

Any person who lives in the same household with Person A

NO symptoms:

- ✓ Quarantine for 14 days following date of last **exposure including complete separation from the person in your house with COVID-19.** This means no contact, no time together in the same room, and no sharing of any spaces, such as same bathroom or bedroom.
- ✓ Quarantine to continue for 14 days after Person A completes isolation if unable to avoid exposure to **Person A**

PERSON C

Any person with close contact to Person A
(>15 min, < 6 feet, index unmasked)

Quarantine immediately and for 14 days following date of last exposure

- ✓ Contact Health Department with any questions 559-600-3332
- ✓ Monitor self for symptoms, take temperature twice a day
- ✓ Notify primary care provider if symptoms develop

PERSON D

Any person who has had exposure to Person B or C

NO QUARANTINE OR ACTION REQUIRED *unless:*

Person B or C develops symptoms OR tests positive and **Person D** had contact with **Person B or C** within 14 days ***then:***

- ✓ contact primary care provider to see about testing
- ✓ Contact Health Services with questions regarding timing and exposure
- ✓ Clear on daily self-health screening tool

Recovered and Released

Definitions:

- **Index case** person with a positive COVID test
- **Isolation** separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick
- **Quarantine** separation and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick
- **Close Contact** someone who has spent 15 minutes or more time within 6 feet or less of the index person unmasked, starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick

Developed with guidance from Fresno County Department of Public Health (7/27/20 – JB)

Workforce Considerations

ROLE OF SCHOOL NURSE AND/OR HEALTH STAFF/CONTACT TRACER

- Once alerted to a fever or respiratory illness in a student or staff, a member of the health staff or contact tracer should communicate with the individual to obtain information about onset of symptoms, specific symptoms and any other pertinent information regarding the illness
- Health staff should call student or staff to check on symptoms and to offer support to the ill individual
- Once ill individual meets criteria listed above, the school nurse will clear the student or staff member to return to work/school

Employee Wellness

Fresno Unified recognizes we all play a role in supporting students, fellow staff members, parents and our community as we reopen schools. This is challenging work so it's important to find ways to provide self-care. In partnership with our Joint Health Management Board (JHMB), the district offers a robust array of wellness supports and supports through our Claremont Employee Assistance Program, including mental health resources. For more information regarding EAP resources, please visit the JHMB website.

Joint Health Management Board

Fresno Unified School District