Did Fresno Unified submit a waiver?

Yes, a waiver was submitted to Fresno County Department of Public Health on September 25th. Submitting a waiver provides the district options for our elementary students should we find ourselves back in the purple tier of the governor's guidelines.

Why are some charter and private schools opening in Fresno County, but not Fresno Unified?

The district has three key areas of consideration when it comes to returning students to campus: safety, stability, and providing high quality instruction. We continue to work with our labor partners to ensure we have equity across the district and our three key areas of consideration are part of returning to school plans. We cannot speak to the reopening processes and plans of private schools and charters.

When does Fresno Unified anticipate bringing students back to school for in-person instruction?

While the governor’s color system will make it possible to have some students on campuses, even welcoming small groups of students requires ensuring safety, stability, and access to high quality instruction. To that end, all of the state and county safety protocols must be followed, including PPE use, screening, and physically distancing of at least six feet. Given that there is no scenario under which we can provide six feet of physical distance for ALL of our students, our return to school will be in phases. An immediate return of all students is NOT imminent. We will be focusing the remainder of the first semester on phasing in very small cohorts of our highest-need students to campus.

Special Education has been given the OK by the governor to open, no matter what “color.” Why haven’t Special Education students been allowed to return to school?

Following all required safety practices, Fresno Unified has been conducting one-on-one in-person assessments for both special education and English learner students. Current health guidance only allows for a small cohort of 10 students, those with the greatest needs, to receive in-person services. Starting on Monday, October 12th we will start our phasing in of very small cohorts of up to 10 students per elementary campus and up to two cohorts of 10 students per secondary campus. These small cohorts will include students with disabilities, foster and homeless youth, and our English Learner Newcomers.

What will it look like for center-based schools with medically fragile students to reopen?

The district is working with our labor partners to develop plans that will provide a safe return to school for our district’s most medically fragile. We plan to work closely with families and medical providers on a safe return for students with medical conditions. All conditions in health plans and IEPs will apply, as well as the county requirements to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (physical distancing, etc.).
Will students be required to wear masks when they return to campus?

Yes. Based on state and local health guidance, masks are required both inside and outside for students, staff and essential visitors over 2 years old. Fresno Unified is supplying five masks to each student and district staff member.

What additional personal protective equipment (PPE) is being provided to employees?

All staff have or will receive five Fresno Unified cloth masks. Additional PPE is provided to health services staff, special education, early learning and athletic trainers, including surgical masks, gowns, gloves, face shields and plexiglass. Classroom and office kits have been created to include hand sanitizer, wipes, first aid kit and gloves.

With physical distancing requirements of six feet, how many students can be in class?

Class sizes will be reduced when we are able to safely return some student to campus for in-person instruction. Based on the size of the classroom, we anticipate approximately 9-12 students in a classroom.

State recommends testing staff for in-person instruction every two weeks. Is there a plan in place for testing staff on a regular basis?

While state guidance may change, at current we anticipate 10% of district staff will be tested for COVID-19 on a rotational basis. We are finalizing what that process would look like.

If a student has been around someone with COVID-19, would they be required to test before coming to school, even with no symptoms?

No. If they are determined a close contact, requirements dictate they quarantine for 14 days regardless of a test result. This is due to the fact that an exposed person can develop COVID-19 anytime during that 14-day incubation period. Should families want to have their child tested, they should contact their healthcare provider or contact one of the county’s many testing sites.

What type of health screening will be in place for students and staff?

Since last spring, Fresno Unified staff have been conducting a self-health screening at home prior to leaving for work. That same screening tool will be in place for students. If an employee, student or essential visitor answers yes to any of the self-health screening questions, they should stay home. We are discussing adding additional safety practices with our labor partners. You can find more detailed information on health and safety protocols in our newest version of the Strategic Plan for Reopening Schools.

Will families be given a choice of sending their student to campus or staying with distance learning?

Yes. Based on required safety practices (wearing a mask, physical distancing of six feet, etc.) parents will have the choice of in-person instruction with their teacher on campus or remaining in the eLearn at my School model. This option will continue to be available at least through the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.