

SECC Guidelines for Reopening Schools 6-23-20

As schools across the SECC look to state and local agencies for guidance in how to plan for safely reopening schools, the Office of Education is providing these guidelines, lists, and other considerations based on the best and most current health information known as of this date. As new guidance and practices emerge, updates will be communicated. It is difficult to create a “one-size-fits-all” scenario for each of our schools spread across five counties. However, these guidelines follow CDC and California State (Education and Public Health Departments) recommendations of best practices, local county recommendations along with medical experts at Loma Linda University Health. Implementation should be tailored for each county. It is important, when a school is reopened, to continue to look at state and local public health authorities and the SECC for updated guidance. Any future decision in regard to discontinuing on-site instruction will be made based on local county public health department directives.

The SECC Office of Education has tried to prepare schools for COVID-19 related consequences (most specifically lower attendance) by requiring revised budgets based on lower enrollment, and decrease in church subsidy, or other sources of income. As we plan to reopen schools across the conference, in-person attendance will likely be less than before the pandemic for a variety of reasons, including:

1. Public health recommendations for children with chronic health issues (e.g. diabetes and asthma) to continue to shelter in place.
2. Loss of income due to unemployment or relocation due to unemployment.
3. Loss of scholarships funded by churches, the conference or other outside resources.
4. Families may relocate due to illness/death of a family member.
5. Families may choose to enroll their children in distance learning programs.

The percentage of children under the age of 18 getting COVID-19 is less than 1%. However, the SECC Office of Education and its Health and Safety Committee still feels it is very important to take the health and safety of returning students, staff and families seriously. As schools reopen for full on-site instruction in August, they are expected to make every effort to follow the guidelines outlined below.

The Purpose of These Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide the tools to ensure the healthiest and safest way to fully reopen schools for onsite instruction in August. These guidelines will accomplish the following:

- Provide checklists to do before and after reopening of schools
- Assist a school in developing and implementing a site-specific protection plan for health and safety.
 - General measures to take
 - Campus access
 - Implementing cleaning and disinfecting protocols and ventilation
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Promoting healthy hygiene
 - Implementing physical distancing
 - Training of staff and students and parents
 - Communication with parents
- Provide further resources for social, mental and emotional assistance.
- Provide resources for developing a plan for alternative ways of instruction if needed again.

GENERAL MEASURES

Regularly review updated guidance from state, county agencies and the SECC Office of Education.

- Develop a plan for closing on-site instruction again if necessary, that includes communication and continuity of education.
- Develop and update a site-specific protection plan to include campus access, cleaning and hygiene practices, personal protective equipment (PPE), physical distancing, and training.
- Communication with parents/students, employees and the community is important and needs to happen repeatedly. It is not required but may be helpful to have your new health and safety plan approved by your local school board as part of your communication with the community.
- Designate a staff liaison or single point leader responsible for responding to CV-19 concerns.
- Effects of COVID-19, including fear, isolation or sorrow may cause students and staff to need more social/emotional support than was provided before the pandemic.
- Expectations regarding student learning outcomes may need to be re-examined and involve identifying resources to assist meeting student needs for those who have experienced trauma due to CV-19 or experience anxiety in readjusting to new procedures in returning to school.
- Policies should not penalize students and families for missing class due to CV-19 related issues. Further, prevent discrimination against students who (or whose) families were or are diagnosed with CV-19.

CAMPUS ACCESS

*(Items with * are required)*

Implement screening and other procedures for all staff, students and visitors entering the facility. Purchase sufficient no-touch thermometers or thermal scanner for symptom screening.

Staff

- *Have staff self-screen before coming to work to ensure temperature is below 100.4, and check for other symptoms outlined by public health officials or if they have had close contact with a person diagnosed with CV-19
- *Engage in symptom screening with visual wellness checks and no-touch thermometer temperature checks as they come on campus. Have one specific entrance for staff.
- *Wash hands or use hand sanitizer once through temperature check upon entering worksites.
- *Create a procedure for checking and reporting if staff members develop symptoms of illness. Keep these records confidential.
- *A staff member may not return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- *Notify local health officials for protocol in notification to staff and families of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality.

Students

- *Instruct parents to screen before leaving for school to ensure temperature is below 100.4, and check for other symptoms outlined by public health officials or if they have had close contact with a person diagnosed with CV-19. Have oral or temporal artery thermometers on hand with disposable probes to confirm any measurements that fall outside the expected "healthy" range. Children should not be sent home on the basis of forehead temp alone.

- *Provide supervised, no-touch thermometer temperature checks as students come on campus.
- *All students must wash hands or use hand sanitizer after entering campus.
- *If a student is symptomatic while entering campus or during the school day, they must be separated from others immediately, isolated with a face mask and continued under supervision until picked up by an authorized adult.
- *Students may not return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- *Notify local health officials for protocol in notification to staff and families of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality.

Outside Visitors and Groups

- *Limit access to campus for parents and other visitors.
- *Have signage in highly visible areas with directions for wearing face coverings, temperature checks and hand washing/sanitizing upon entry.
- *If schools have plexiglass or some sort of dividers in the reception/lobby/entry area, signs should be posted that all visitors are required to wear masks beyond that point. If they do not, signs should be posted on the doors used to enter the building that face coverings are required beyond that point.
- Screening should include verbally or filling out questionnaire with questions in regard to:
 - Fever in the last 24 hours
 - Cough or shortness of breath that is getting worse in last 7 days
 - In last 3 days, have fever, sore throat, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, change in taste or smell
 - In past 14 days been in close contact with someone diagnosed with CV-19
- *Establish protocol for accepting deliveries safely.

CLEANING, DISINFECTING AND VENTILATION

*(Items with * are required)*

Establish a more regimented daily cleaning schedule to ensure frequent cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces following CDPH guidance.

- Consider the assignment of restrooms to specific classes.
- *If drinking fountains cannot be modified to filling stations, suspend use of drinking fountains and instead encourage the use of reusable water bottles.
- Discourage sharing of instructional items that are difficult to clean or disinfect. Acquire adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials and objects. To the extent possible, limit sharing of art supplies, books, learning aids, electronic devices, toys, and games. But where allowed, disinfect between use and have students wash hands before and after use.
- Limit use of shared playground equipment in favor of physical activities that require less contact with surfaces. Consider limiting one class using playground equipment at a time.
- Limit stuffed animals and other toys that are difficult to clean and sanitize.
- Keep each child's belongings separated and in individual storage containers, cubbies, or lockers.
- *Disinfect surfaces between uses, such as:
 - Desks and tables
 - Chairs
 - Dividers
 - Keyboards, phones, headsets, copy machines.
- *Disinfect frequently touched surfaces that include but are not limited to:
 - Door handles
 - Light switches
 - Sink handles
 - Bathroom surfaces

- Make sure anyone cleaning or disinfecting is equipped with proper protective equipment that could include face coverings, gloves, goggles, etc.
- Ensure the use of safe cleaning products approved for use in schools and safe for children according to the EPA and that they are stored in a restricted access area.
- Ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfection.
 - *Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible and open windows and doors when practical.
 - Replace and check air filters in HVAC systems more regularly.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

*(Items with * are required)*

Staff

- All staff should wear face coverings when feasible. Per CDPH guidance, teachers could use face shields, which enable students to see their faces and to avoid potential barriers to phonological instruction.
- *School administration is responsible for supplying at least one non-disposable face covering for each employee. If needed, inquire at the SECC Office of Education for financial assistance.
- Prioritize the provision and use of face masks and/or other PPE to staff based upon work assignments. Provide other protective equipment as appropriate for work assignments.
- Front office and food service employees must wear masks when appropriate and as much as possible and be provided with gloves for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Custodial staff must be provided with proper PPE for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Face coverings are not recommended for anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the covering without assistance. Reasonable accommodations such as a face shield with a cloth drape for those who are unable to wear face coverings for medical reasons should be made.

Students

- Students should be encouraged to use cloth face coverings when possible, especially in circumstances when physical distancing cannot be maintained (details on physical distancing below).
- Consider how the school will address students with disabilities who may not be able to wear face coverings.
- Consider times and places to give students a break from wearing face coverings.

Students and staff should frequently be reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently. *Face coverings do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing. Face coverings are most essential when physical distancing is not possible.*

HEALTHY HYGIENE PRACTICES

*(Items with * are required)*

Teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose and mouth, and covering cough and sneezes among students and staff.

- Teach and remind staff and students to use a tissue to wipe their nose and to cough/sneeze inside a tissue or their elbow.
- Students and staff should wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap rubbing thoroughly after application, and use paper towels to dry hands.
- Staff should model and practice hand washing often. Develop routines. Frequent hand washing is more effective than the use of hand sanitizers.

- Consider portable hand washing stations, if feasible, throughout the school to minimize movement and congregation in the bathrooms.
- *Ensure adequate supplies are available to promote healthy hygiene.
- When feasible and safe, leave doors open or ajar to classrooms and restrooms so that students and staff do not have to touch doorknobs.
- *Provide hand sanitizer in each classroom that does not have access to soap and water.
- *Discontinue the use of shared food and beverage equipment.
- Provide adequate supplies within easy reach including tissues and no-touch trash cans if possible.
- Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors when safe to do so.
- *Serve individually plated or bagged meals. Avoid sharing of foods and utensils and buffet or family-style meals.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

*(Items with * are required)*

Implementing physical/social distancing in schools will require advance planning and involve examining every setting, transition, and activity in order to safely maintain physical distancing recommendations. As much as possible a 6 foot separation between desks or standing in line is the expectation.

Arrival/Departure

- Stagger arrival and drop off time and locations as consistently practical.
- *Place markers on the pavement to show where students should stand if a line forms while waiting for temperature checks. Consider using privacy boards if necessary.
- *Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible.
- *Display adequate signage for directions in following safe distances.
- *Limit the number of parents and other visitors during drop off and pick up times, that can be reasonably accommodated while maintaining a minimum of 6 feet of distance between individuals

In the Classroom

- To the greatest extent possible, attempt to have students remain in the same space and in groups as small and consistent as possible. For example, in elementary grades, consider ways to keep teachers with one group of students for the whole day. Or keep the students in one classroom with different teachers coming and going.
- Maximize space between seating and desks. Distance teacher and other staff desks 6 feet away from student desks as much as possible.
- *To the greatest extent possible, re-arrange desks/tables in the classrooms to be 6 feet apart, facing the same direction and assigning only one student per desk/table. This may mean removing other furniture in the classroom.
- *If less than 6 feet (between 3-6 feet only), students must wear face coverings. If less than 3 feet, face coverings and dividers are required. At no time are desks to be touching. There must be walking space between desks. Tables (4-6 ft length) are acceptable under the parameters listed above as long as individual work spaces are clearly defined. Face coverings may be optional for grades K-3.
- If necessary, utilize other campus spaces for instructional activities (e.g. lecture halls, gyms, auditoriums, cafeterias, outdoors).
- Place markers on the floor to show where students should stand or line up for certain activities.
- Consider redesigning activities for smaller groups and rearranging furniture and play spaces to maintain separation.
- Implement procedures for turning in assignments to minimize contact.

Non-Classroom Spaces

- Minimize congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable. For example, consider establishing one-way hallways or staggered passing times. Post signage and install barriers to direct traffic around campus.
- Consider staggering recess times so smaller groups are in the play areas at a time and disinfect in between uses. Or holding recess activities in separated areas designated by class.
- Modify food service practices to limit exposure when distributing food and when students are eating.
- Consider strategies to limit physical interaction during meals and maintain a 6 foot distance between students during meals. For example, depending on the size and shape of lunch tables, limit one student per bench or per table, or install barriers; have students eat at their desk or outside area maintaining 6 feet separation.
- Increase the number of food serving points or stagger cafeteria use.
- *Suspend use of shared condiments or buffets. Serve meals in individual containers.
- If 6 foot physical distancing cannot occur in auditoriums or gyms for assemblies and chapel programs, establish alternatives such as smaller groups in repeated sessions instead of one large group or live-streaming programs into the classroom.
- Limit nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving other groups at the same time.
- *The SECC is allowing only virtual activities in lieu of field trips and intergroup activities through December 31, 2020. Tentative plans for activities and trips beginning in 2021 may begin but no monetary deposits or payments are to be made unless full refunds are possible. Further directives on what will be allowed in 2021 will come from the SECC Office of Education in the fall of 2020.
- *Lobby/reception/entry areas to the school should have floor markings or clearly marked seating indicating physical distancing.

Staff

- Avoid staff congregation in work environments, break rooms, staff rooms, and bathrooms.
- Avoid grouping staff together for training or staff development. Consider conducting the training virtually or, if in-person, ensure distancing is maintained.
- Where possible, rearrange workspaces to incorporate a minimum of 6 feet between employees and students.
- If physical distancing between workspaces or between employees and students and visitors is not possible, add physical barriers that cannot be moved.

TRAINING

*(Items with * are required)*

Train all staff, students and educate families in the following safety areas:

- *Staying home when sick
- *Frequent handwashing (practice and develop routines)
- *Coughing and sneezing etiquette (practice and develop routines)
- *Keeping hands away from face (practice and develop routines)
- *Using of face coverings (practice and develop routines)
- *Importance of physical distancing (practice and develop routines)
- *COVID-19 symptom identification
- *Procedures if a student or staff gets sick with COVID-19 or is exposed.

Training for families can come in flyers, letters, lists or links and communicated through mail, email, social media post, Zoom meetings or other virtual formats.

Training for staff can be through virtual or appropriate in-person staff meetings, or emails.

Training for students can take place in class by the teacher.

COMMUNICATION

*(Items with * are required)*

Proactive communication with all stakeholders that share information about reopening schools and identifies and addresses concerns, can help prepare staff, students and their families for return to school.

- *Designate a staff liaison or liaisons to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees and families should know how to contact them.
- *Provide educational materials to families in the areas of:
 - Symptoms
 - Handwashing
 - Sanitation practice
 - Physical distancing
 - Proper use of PPE
 - Screening
 - Reporting
 - Best health practices
- *Maintain a communication system that allows staff and families to report symptoms and exposures while maintaining confidentiality.
- *Create and communicate a plan for what happens if the school has to close again.

MENTAL/EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Some students and/or staff may be anxious about their risk when going back to school. Others may have experienced trauma during the time schools were closed. Mental/emotional support during re-entry can help staff and students, especially those who are struggling to adjust to being back at school. Schools are encouraged to:

- Plan for a positive, supportive re-entry to school focused on helping students with the transition and adjusting to changes in the school structure and schedule.
- Research and post information on the school website and on social media for parents regarding ways to help children cope with the virus and any trauma resulting from it.
- Quickly identify students, families or staff who may be experiencing problems adjusting and provide materials to help in a loving, supportive manner.
- If needed, refer those to specialized assistance (school counselor, community mental health professionals, etc.)

SUMMARY OF REQUIRED ITEMS

Campus Access

Whole Section

Cleaning, Disinfecting, Ventilation

- *If drinking fountains cannot be modified to filling stations, suspend use of drinking fountains and instead encourage the use of reusable water bottles.
- *Disinfect surfaces between uses, such as: desks, tables, chairs, dividers, keyboards, phones, headsets, copy machines.
- *Disinfect frequently touched surfaces that include but are not limited to: door handles, light switches, sink handles, bathroom surfaces.
- Ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfection.
 - *Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible and open windows and doors when practical.

PPE

- *School administration is responsible for supplying at least one non-disposable face covering for each employee. If needed, inquire at the SECC Office of Education for financial assistance.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

- *Ensure adequate supplies are available to promote healthy hygiene.
- *Provide hand sanitizer in each classroom that does not have access to soap and water.
- *Discontinue the use of shared food and beverage equipment.
- *Serve individually plated or bagged meals. Avoid sharing of foods and utensils and buffet or family-style meals.

Physical Distancing

- *Place markers on the pavement to show where students should stand if a line forms while waiting for temperature checks. Consider using privacy boards if necessary.
- *Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible.
- *Display adequate signage for directions in following safe distances.
- *Limit the number of parents and other visitors during drop off and pick up times, that can be reasonably accommodated while maintaining a minimum of 6 feet of distance between individuals.
- *To the greatest extent possible, re-arrange desks/tables in the classrooms to be 6 feet apart, facing the same direction and assigning only one student per desk/table. This may mean removing other furniture in the classroom.
- *If less than 6 feet (between 3-6 feet only), students must wear face coverings. If less than 3 feet, face coverings and dividers are required. At no time are desks to be touching. There must be walking space between desks. Tables (4-6 ft length) are acceptable under the parameters listed above as long as individual work spaces are clearly defined. Face coverings may be optional for grades K-3.
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- *Lobby/reception/entry areas to the school should have floor markings or clearly marked seating indicating physical distancing.

Training and Communication

Whole sections

RESOURCES

Dr. April Wilson, MD, MPH

Loma Linda University Health

Chair- Department of Preventive Medicine

Dr. Adrian Cotton, MD

Chief of Medical Operations, LLUH Hospitals

California Department of Public Health

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx#>

<https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/expanded-personal-services.pdf>

California Department of Education

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/coronavirus.asp>

Emotional Health Resources

<https://covid19.ca.gov/resources-for-emotional-support-and-well-being/>

California Association of School Counselors

<https://covid19k12counseling.org/>

Imperial County Roadmap to Recovery

<https://www.icoe.org/news/icoe-releases-pathway-reopening-our-schools-covid-19-recovery-guidance>

CDC: Hygiene Practices

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>

CDC: Using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/using-ppe.html>

CDC: Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

6 Steps for Safe and Effective Disinfectant Use

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-04/documents/disinfectants-onepager.pdf>

County Public Health Contact Info

San Bernardino Department of Public Health (800) 782-4264

Riverside County Public Health (951) 358-5000

San Diego Public Health Services 858-694-3900

Orange County Public Health (714) 834-3155

Imperial County Public Health Department 442-265-1444