

COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

The following policy establishes actions that may be taken by the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) to provide a safe learning and working environment during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and shall supersede any conflicting language in existing County Superintendent (Superintendent) policies or administrative regulations until the Superintendent determines that the need for this policy no longer exists. The Superintendent acknowledges that, due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, federal, state, and local orders impacting SCOE operations are subject to change without notice. In the event that any federal, state, or local order may conflict with this policy, the order shall govern.

The Superintendent recognizes that students and staff have the right to a safe campus that protects their physical and psychological health and well-being. The Superintendent shall open school campuses when deemed safe for in-person instruction or other operations. The Superintendent's decision to reopen school campuses for classes and preschool programs that are supervised, controlled, or operated by SCOE, shall be made in consultation with, or after review of information provided or made available by, state and local health officials, and neighboring school districts. SCOE shall evaluate its capacity to implement safety precautions and to conduct full or partial school operations, and shall consider student, parent/guardian, and community input.

Prior to the return to on-site instruction, the Superintendent or designee shall provide to students, parents/guardians, and staff current information about COVID-19, including its symptoms, how it is transmitted, how to prevent transmission, the current recommendations from the state and local departments of public health, and any other information and/or resources to prepare for a safe return to on-campus teaching and learning. The Superintendent or designee shall also provide information on the processes and protocols SCOE will seek to implement in order to minimize the health risks associated with COVID-19, including, but not limited to, physically separating individuals (social distancing), limits on large gatherings, the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves, and the sanitization of facilities.

Student Support

As school campuses reopen, staff shall provide a caring and nurturing educational environment for students. SCOE may provide instruction on social-emotional well-being to all students, including information on how to deal with stress and anxiety in healthy ways and the importance of emotional well-being for academic success.

Staff shall pay attention to students' potential increased mental health concerns. Counseling, other support services, and/or referrals to other agencies shall be proactively considered to assist students in dealing with the social and emotional effects of COVID-19, such as stress, anxiety, depression, grief, social isolation, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

As needed, SCOE may provide referrals of students and families to basic needs assistance or social services, and may assess students for eligibility for the free and reduced-price meal program or assistance under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The Superintendent or designee shall seek to ensure that staff understand their obligations as mandated reporters to report suspected child abuse or neglect, whether the student is on campus or participating in distance learning.

Policy 0470 (Continued)

The Superintendent or designee may provide information to staff and parents/guardians regarding how to provide mental health support to students, recognizing that SCOE's trained mental and emotional support personnel (or contracted partners) should be the primary source of actual mental health support. The Superintendent or designee, by and through SCOE's trained mental and emotional support personnel (or contracted partners), may also provide counseling to staff who are experiencing emotional difficulties as a result of COVID-19.

Instruction/Schedules

SCOE shall offer a combination of on-campus instruction and distance learning to meet the needs of all students.

The Superintendent or designee shall work with school administrators, teachers, other staff, students, and parents/guardians to develop a schedule of on-campus instruction or instructional support for each school. If all students cannot attend on-campus instruction for the entire school day due to space limitations as a result of social distancing requirements, the Superintendent or designee may consider arrangements for rotating groups of students, such as on a daily or weekly basis, and/or shall provide on-campus instruction to students with the greatest need for in-person supervision.

Priority for on-campus instruction shall be given to the lowest performing students, students with disabilities, elementary level students, students at risk of child abuse and neglect, homeless students, foster youth, and English learners. To the extent practicable, SCOE shall also consider the needs of essential workers, as designated in the Governor's executive orders, for childcare during normal school hours.

On-campus instruction may be prioritized for subjects that are difficult to deliver through distance learning, such as laboratory science, art, or career technical education.

For distance learning, lessons may be delivered through live video sessions, pre-recorded lectures, or other technology-based distance learning platforms and/or SCOE may supplement on-campus instruction with home assignments. As much as possible, distance learning shall be provided through small-group synchronous learning.

The Superintendent or designee shall seek to provide training to teachers and other instructional staff involved in distance learning, including training on how to use any technology or platform approved for distance learning by the school and opportunities for the sharing of best practices among instructional staff. Available training resources may also be provided to students and parents/guardians.

Evaluation of Academic Progress Following Campus Closure

Upon return to on-campus instruction following an extended campus closure, the Superintendent or designee shall evaluate the impact of the campus closure on students' academic progress. Such evaluation may:

1. Address student-specific needs arising from the transition back into on-campus instruction.
2. Consider whether a student has experienced a regression of skills and/or lack of progress.
3. If regression and/or a lack of progress is present, identify opportunities for recovery, including supplemental educational services and/or new or different support services.

For students with disabilities, the evaluation of academic progress shall also be used to determine whether an additional or revised individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan is needed for the student to be academically successful when returning to on-campus instruction. The Superintendent or designee may

Policy 0470 (Continued)

prioritize urgent student need in scheduling initial and triennial assessments and annual IEP meetings. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure SCOE compliance with all procedural timelines for IEPs and Section 504 plans as required, unless amended by executive order.

Grading

For each grading period, student progress shall be reported in accordance with Administrative Policy 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement. However, in the event that school campuses are closed for an extended period of time during any grading period, the Superintendent or designee, may adopt one or more alternative grading policies which may vary by grade level or type of course.

Health Screening of Students

To the extent feasible, and as permitted by law, students shall be self-screened by parents for COVID-19 symptoms before entering a school bus and/or upon arrival at school each day.

If the screening indicates a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms, the parent is required to keep their student at home. If the student exhibits symptoms at any time during the school day, the student shall be placed in a supervised isolation area until the student's parent/guardian is contacted and the student can be transported home or to a health care facility. School staff may provide the parent/guardian with referrals to school or community health centers for further testing.

Student Absence and Attendance

The Superintendent recognizes that COVID-19 may impact the attendance of students following the reopening of school campuses. The Superintendent or designee shall notify students and parents/guardians of expectations regarding school attendance. Such notification shall direct any student who contracts the virus or lives with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home in accordance with state and local health directives to curtail the spread of the disease.

Students who are infected with COVID-19 shall be excluded from on-campus instruction and allowed to return following public health guidelines.

Students who are identified as being in a high-risk population for serious complications from COVID-19 because of a medical condition may request assessment and reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or Section 504, potentially including an alternative instructional method that allows the student to continue receiving instruction off campus.

When a student is absent, the student's parent/guardian shall notify the school of the reason for the absence.

If a student would otherwise be required to attend on-campus instruction but is kept home by the parents/guardians due to concerns for the welfare of their child, the principal or designee shall work with the student and parent/guardian to determine if reasonable, alternative means of instruction are available, which may include distance or blended learning, independent study, printed class assignments, or other reasonable means.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain enrollment and student attendance data, including the participation of students in distance learning, and shall report data in accordance with state requirements.

SCOE shall track patterns of student absence throughout SCOE. When a student who is participating in distance learning repeatedly fails to check in with the teacher when required, the teacher and/or attendance supervisor shall attempt to contact the student or parent/guardian to resolve the issues leading to the absence.

Social Distancing

In order to maintain a campus environment that allows for social distancing, SCOE shall assess the capacity of school facilities, including classrooms, and outdoor areas, and determine the means by which the facilities can best be utilized considering space and time alternatives.

Encourage parents to transport students to school by private vehicle to reduce the number of students traveling on school buses.

Large gatherings, such as assemblies, rallies, field trips, extracurricular activities, and athletic events, shall be suspended until the Superintendent determines, consistent with guidance from state and local health officials, that it is safe to resume such activities. The Superintendent or designee may grant an exception if an activity can be arranged to take place in phases or per class or modified in a manner that would keep participants from violating social distancing recommendations. When deciding whether an activity may resume, the Superintendent or designee may consider the size of the group that participates, the extent to which the students and other attendees have physical contact, whether the activity can be modified to avoid physical contact, if shared equipment is required for the activity, and if social distancing can be maintained.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Hygiene Practices

The Superintendent will follow California Department of Public Health guidelines related to encouraging or mandating students, staff, and visitors to wear PPE while on school campuses or school buses, especially in high-traffic areas and/or when social distancing is not possible. If the use of PPE in schools is required by state or local health officials, SCOE shall provide PPE to students and staff who do not bring their own personal PPE. Students and staff shall be provided instruction in the proper use, removal, disposal, and cleaning of PPE.

Reasonable accommodations shall be made for anyone who is unable to wear a face covering for confirmed medical reasons.

The Superintendent also encourages students and staff to practice good hygiene, such as appropriate covering of coughs and sneezes and regular hand washing of at least 20 seconds, including before eating and after blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing. SCOE shall provide adequate time and opportunity for students to wash hands and shall make hand sanitizer available in areas where handwashing is less accessible. Signage regarding healthy hygiene practices and how to stop the spread of COVID-19 may be posted in and around school facilities.

Sanitization of Facilities and Equipment

School facilities, school buses, and shared equipment such as desks, tables, sports/playground equipment, computers, door handles, light switches, and other frequently used equipment and supplies shall be cleaned and disinfected daily with appropriate cleaning agents. Disinfectants and cleaning agents shall be stored properly and in a manner not accessible to students.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that ventilation systems are operating properly and that air flow and ventilation within County Office of Education facilities is increased, to the extent possible, by opening windows and doors and using fans and air conditioning. To the extent possible, garbage shall be removed daily and disposed of safely.

Food Services

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students have access to clean drinking water other than through a drinking fountain, and food which is procured, stored, and served in a manner that reduces the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission and follows state and national guidelines for nutrition.

For meals that are consumed on school grounds, the Superintendent or designee shall seek to ensure that students will be able to maintain proper social distancing while eating. In order to do so, the Superintendent or designee may consider the consumption of meals in classrooms, the outdoors, and/or other County Office of Education grounds.

Meal service shall also be available through their district of residence to students participating in distance learning, which may include and/or entirely consist of a "grab and go" service or delivery.

Due to the changing financial circumstances of many families as a result of COVID-19, the Superintendent or designee shall regularly provide information to students and parents/guardians regarding the free and reduced-price meal program, eligibility, and how to apply for the program.

Staff

Prior to reopening campuses, the Superintendent or designee shall review staff assignments and, upon request, may reassign employees to reduce exposure to the virus, especially for high-risk staff. When feasible for the position, and in conformity with any governing collective bargaining requirements, employees may be granted a remote work assignment.

In the event that employees are unable to perform their duties due to partial or full closure of campuses, and they cannot otherwise perform their essential or assigned functions remotely, the Superintendent shall compensate employees as required by any collective bargaining agreement or by law.

Any employee who contracts the virus, shows symptoms of possible infection, or is caring for someone who has been diagnosed with the virus shall self-quarantine for the period of time recommended by health authorities in order to prevent the spread of the disease to students or other staff. The employee is urged to promptly get tested and confirm to the Superintendent or designee that the employee is/is not positive for COVID-19.

An employee may use personal illness and injury leave and/or family care and medical leave, as applicable, if the employee is unable to work or telework because the employee is ill or needs to take care of a spouse, parent/guardian, or child with COVID-19 or other serious health condition.

Until December 31, 2020, an eligible employee may take paid sick leave for up to 80 hours, or the number of hours that a part-time employee works on average over a two-week period, if the employee is unable to work or telework.

SCOE shall post, in conspicuous places where employee notices are customarily posted, a notice prepared by the U.S. Department of Labor regarding the requirements of 29 USC 2601 and 2620.

Follow-Up with Infected Persons/Contact Tracing

The Superintendent or designee shall work with county health officials to track confirmed cases of students and staff with COVID-19, including, but not limited to, following up with students, their parents/guardians, and staff who exhibit symptoms while at school and those who report an absence or miss work due to illness. To the extent required by law, the Superintendent or designee shall report confirmed cases to local health authorities.

Policy 0470 (Continued)

If a student, family member of a student, or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, SCOE shall assist local health officials in conducting contact-tracing to identify potentially exposed individuals and ask them to self-quarantine, which may include not participating in on-campus instruction. While maintaining the privacy of the infected person, SCOE shall inform other students and staff with whom the infected person may have had contact in school.

Nondiscrimination

Every attempt shall be made to ensure that individual students and staff shall not be identified as being COVID-positive, nor shall students be discriminated against, harassed, retaliated against, or denied access to a free and appropriate public education because of their COVID-19 status or medical condition. Staff shall not disclose confidential or privileged information, including the medical history or health information of students and staff.

The Superintendent or designee shall investigate any reports of harassment, intimidation, and bullying targeted at any student based on COVID status, exposure, or high-risk status.

SCOE shall seek to collaborate with local health officials and agencies, community organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that County Office of Education operations reflect current recommendations and best practices for keeping students, staff, and visitors safe during the COVID-19 state of emergency. The Superintendent or designee shall keep informed about resources and services available in the community to assist students and families in need.

School visitors and volunteers shall be limited in number and expected to observe all County Office of Education protocols for COVID-19.

Use of school facilities by persons or organizations for community purposes involving large gatherings shall be suspended until the Superintendent determines, consistent with guidance from state and local health officials, that it is safe to resume such activities.

Potential Reclosure of Campus

SCOE shall monitor student and staff absences and data provided by local health officials to determine if there is a risk of resurgence of COVID-19 and a need to reclose school campuses for the protection of students, staff, and the community. The Superintendent or designee shall develop plans and procedures for alternative methods of operations to the extent possible if reclosure becomes necessary.

If any person diagnosed with COVID-19 is known to have been in a County Office building(s), the Superintendent or designee shall seek to timely notify local health and/or occupational, safety and health officials, as required by law or regulation, and seek to comply with any directive for action. The building or occupied spaces may be closed until cleaning and disinfecting of the building can be completed. If state and county officials permit the reopening of campuses, the County Office shall continue to take reasonable preventative measures described in this policy.

If local health officials report substantial community transmission of COVID-19, campus closures of more than two weeks may be necessary, and the Superintendent or designee shall cancel group activities and events during that period. Campuses shall not reopen until recommended by local health officials.

OFFICE OF THE SOLANO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Policy 0470 (Continued)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

- 44978 Sick leave for certificated employees
- 45191 Leave of absence for illness and injury, classified employees
- 48205 Excused absences
- 48213 Prior parent notification of exclusion; exemption
- 48240 Supervisors of attendance
- 49450 Physical Examinations
- 49451 Exemption from physical exam; exclusion from attendance

GOVERNMENT CODE

- 11135 Nondiscrimination in programs or activities funded by state
- 12945.1-12945.2 California Family Rights Act

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

- 120230 Exclusion from attendance

LABOR CODE

- 245-249 Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act of 2014

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2

- 11087-11098 California Family Rights Act

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

- 202 Exclusion from attendance
- 306 Explanation of absence
- 420-421 Record of verification of absence due to illness and other causes

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

- 2601-2654 Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended, especially:
 - 2601 Paid sick leave
 - 2620 Public health emergency leave

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

- 1760 Note National School Lunch program waivers addressing COVID-19

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 29

- 825.100-825.702 Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

Policy Cross-Reference:

- 0400 - Comprehensive Plans
- 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities
- 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment
- 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan
- 1240 - Volunteer Assistance
- 1250 - Visitors/Outsiders
- 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures
- 1330 - Use of School Facilities
- 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools
- 1700 - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools
- 3514.1 - Hazardous Substances
- 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan
- 3540 - Transportation
- 3543 - Transportation Safety and Emergencies
- 4119.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)

Policy Cross-Reference Cont'd:

- 4151 - Employee Compensation
- 4157 - Employee Safety
- 4161.1 - Personal Illness/Injury Leave
- 5113 - Absences and Excuses
- 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy
- 5113.11 - Attendance Supervision
- 5131.2 – Bullying
- 5141 - Health Care and Emergencies
- 5141.3 - Health Examinations
- 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting
- 5141.52 - Suicide Prevention
- 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment
- 6111 - School Calendar
- 6142.8 - Comprehensive Health Education
- 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities
- 6153 - School-Sponsored Trips
- 6158 - Independent Study
- 6159 - Individualized Education Program
- 6159.1 - Procedural Safeguards and Complaints for Special Education
- 6164.6 - Identification and Education Under Section 504
- 6173 - Education for Homeless Children
- 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth
- 6174 - Education for English Learners