

Carmel Unified School District

Office of the Interim Superintendent



Welcome back to the 2020-21 school year!

Obviously, this will not be a typical year as we continue to be challenged, along with the rest of the country, with our new normal during a global pandemic. While many of us have opinions as to the hows and whats of the situation, school districts are tasked with remaining nimble while we navigate the ever changing landscape. The latest guidance from Governor Newsom and the California Department of Public Health outlines that we can consider reopening schools for in-person instruction when Monterey County is in the “Red Tier” for 14 consecutive days. Unfortunately, we are currently in the “Purple Tier” as a county.

We are actively preparing for the possibility of reopening. CUSD is taking all the steps necessary to comply with the requirements in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with our Associations to ensure that our schools are ready to open once the County gives us the greenlight. Our MOUs are very similar to other agreements throughout the state and the safety components have been established to provide the most safe environments for our students as well as teachers and staff. We are also working with Forensic Analytical, an environmental health consulting firm, to establish written protocols in relation to all safety issues in various settings on campuses (offices, science labs, locker rooms, cafeterias, staff rooms, restrooms, weight rooms etc). This will also include establishing protocols for appropriate ventilation with scheduled filter replacement and possible air filter systems. In addition, age appropriate signage and directional markings will be provided to support safe navigation of campuses. To date we have:

- Created schedules for hybrid learning
- Restructured classroom and office spacing to ensure six feet distance
- Acquired Personal Protective Equipment (masks, face shields, gowns, gloves, thermometers)
- Built handwashing stations and hand sanitizer dispensers
- Established a required campus check in system to ensure the ability to trace Covid-19 exposures
- Developed training for staff to adhere to safety procedures
- Analyzed bus transportation to adhere to safety standards
- Established Covid-19 leave processes within Human Resources to comply with law
- Installed plexiglass barriers where needed

Recently, the state opened up the option for small academic cohorts of students on campuses. With that, we currently have cohorts of staff children and cohorts of students who do not have internet service at their home attending each school. Our next cohorts will include our most vulnerable populations: our special needs students, English Learners, homeless youth, and foster youth students. The cohorts are allowed to be 14 students with 2 adults.

We are planning monthly Town Hall meetings this fall. The next one will be September 21st. The format will be the same as before, with the opportunity to ask questions of district staff and time to share your thoughts. In addition, district administration welcomes emails and phone calls as issues arise that you would like to discuss. Link to register in advance for this webinar: https://carmelunified.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_pctQzXJsTr2HMGGoc7F00Q

We understand that the current situation is extremely challenging for everyone: students, parents, teachers, classified staff, non-represented staff, board members, and administrators. People are struggling on many levels to maintain a sense of normal. We need the support from each other now more than ever. Wellness activities and self-care are critical as it seems we will be dealing with these issues for a while. Reach out to those who need it, and if necessary point them to mental health resources that are available. Be kind to each other....and remember “This Too Shall Pass”.

Trisha Dellis

P.S. As this communication was being sent, the guidance related to applying for waivers shifted. We are analyzing the waiver process at this point in time...stay tuned.