

Marin County Schools Public Health Waiver Process and Application

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Mary Jane Burke, Marin County Superintendent of Schools

August 14, 2020

Overview

On July 17, 2020 Governor Newsom announced statewide guidance that public, private, independent and parochial schools will be allowed to return to site-based classroom instruction when the county has been off of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) county monitoring (“watch”) list for fourteen consecutive days. The County of Marin was placed on the monitoring list in early July. When Marin County meets state requirements for return to site-based classroom instruction Marin County Public Health Guidelines published June 18, 2020 and updated August 12, 2020 will remain in effect for Marin County schools.

Authority

On July 17, 2020 the California Department of Public Health released the [COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California](#), 2020-2021 School Year, which includes the following language: ***“A waiver of this criteria may be granted by the local health officer for elementary schools to open for in-person instruction. A waiver may only be granted if one is requested by the superintendent (or equivalent for charter or private schools), in consultation with labor, parent and community organizations. Local health officers must review local community epidemiological data, consider other public health interventions, and consult with CDPH when considering a waiver request.”***

Waiver Application Process

The Marin County Public Health Officer will consider waiver applications from public, private, independent and parochial elementary schools (grades TK-6) in Marin County, and the applicant’s submitted School Site-Specific Protection Plan for reopening, that can attest to the following:

- Marin County Public Health Guidelines published on June 18, 2020 and updated August 12, 2020 have been implemented and are detailed in the School Site-Specific Protection Plan.
- [A School Site-Specific Protection Plan \(Updated August 12, 2020\)](#) has been developed, is in place, has been published and posted on the school or district website, will be updated with guidance provided by Marin County Public Health and the California Department of Public Health, ***and is included as an attachment in the application.***
- The Superintendent, Head of School (or equivalent or designated staff) has consulted with labor, parents and community organizations as required by the California Department of Public Health. If the school does not have a labor organization the school has consulted with school site staff.

- Private, independent and parochial schools must have a plan to perform COVID-19 testing that includes the following:
 - Surveillance testing of all school site staff is recommended before site-based classroom instruction is resumed, and then no less than once every two months (approximately 50% of staff tested every month).
 - Testing associated with school-based COVID-19 cases, exposures, or outbreaks, following the recommendations of Marin County Public Health.
 - Schools must utilize a COVID-19 testing vendor that offers testing results within 72 hours.
- Public Schools will coordinate with Public Health on a plan to perform COVID-19 testing that meets Public Health recommendations.
- Schools must identify primary and secondary points of contact who will be trained by Marin County Public Health to address concerns around practices, protocols, or potential exposure. These points of contact will serve as liaisons to Public Health, and contact information is identified in the School Site-Specific Protection Plan.
- The Superintendent, Head of School (or equivalent) will follow Public Health Officer and CDPH guidance to determine triggers for switching to distance learning and when to physically close the school to suspend site-based classroom instruction.
- A brief (500 word) overview of the context of the waiver application including the schools' unique situation, experience operating student programs during the pandemic*, and how the school will meet the needs of students, teachers, staff and the community is included in the application.

Applications and all supporting documents will be submitted to the Public Health Officer through the Marin County Office of Education at PublicHealthWaiver@marinschools.org at least 14 days prior to targeted return to site-based classroom instruction. Based upon projected release of Waiver Application on Friday, August 14, 2020, (and local transmission indicators are within acceptable range) the following is a tentative timeline for application review and processing:

- **Completed Applications Received by 5:00 PM Wednesday, August 19**
 - Review completed applications by Friday, August 28, 2020
 - For successful applications, Public Health Recommended approval to CDPH, Friday, August 28
 - Three day State review and response window, Wednesday, September 2**
 - Notification of Waiver Application status, Thursday, September 3
 - Permissible start date, if application is approved - Tuesday, September 8
- **Completed Applications Received by 5:00 PM Wednesday, August 26**
 - Review completed applications by Friday, September 4, 2020
 - For successful applications, Public Health Recommended approval to CDPH, Friday, September 4
 - Three day State review and response window, Wednesday, September 9**
 - Notification of Waiver Application status, Thursday, September 10
 - Permissible start date, if application is approved - Monday, September 14

**Priority consideration will be given to schools serving low income communities, schools who primarily conduct instructional activities outdoors, schools who have been early adopters of COVID-19 health and safety protocols with an established successful record of providing service to students in the Spring and Summer, and schools with a demonstrated commitment to supporting the priority of equity in our community.*

***Pending questions or concerns raised by the California Department of Public Health about application.*

Marin County School Waiver Application to Marin County Public Health Officer

August 14, 2020

Please submit completed applications electronically with attachments to
PublicHealthWaiver@marinschools.org

The Marin County Public Health Officer will consider completed waiver applications from Marin County public, private, independent and parochial schools for grades TK-6 to resume site-based classroom instruction while Marin County is on the California Department of Public Health county monitoring list. Completed applications will be considered in the order received, along with local community epidemiological data, and the applicant's School Site-Specific Protection Plan (which must be included). Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant. Applications must be submitted a minimum of 14 days prior to the targeted start of site-based classroom instruction.

Local Education Agency (District or Equivalent):	Date of Application:
Superintendent, Head of School (or equivalent) Name:	Phone:
Address:	Date of Proposed Start:
Email:	School Type (check one): Traditional/Alternative Public School Charter School Private, Independent or Parochial

School(s):	Number of Schools:
Testing Vendor (if applicable):	Testing Vendor Phone:

Brief overview of the context of the application and the school's unique circumstances (500 words maximum):

Consultation - Please list dates and names of organizations consulted with in the section below.

Labor:

Name of Organization(s):	Date(s):
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If no labor organization represents staff at school, please describe process for consultation with staff:

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Parent and Community Organizations:

Name of Organization(s):	Date(s):
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Equity Priority

In an effort to respond to the needs of those most vulnerable in our community due to socio-economic challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, appropriate resources should be made available to promote equitable educational opportunities. All applicants are asked to describe how your site intends to support this effort. Understanding that there may be follow up as needs are better defined, resources that schools may be able to offer to support learning for low income students include:

- A significant percentage of socio-economically disadvantaged student body
- Financial support for instructors for student learning hubs
- Access to programming or staff to offer instruction to low income children
- Technology aids
- Space on campus to host learning hubs
- Enhanced scholarships for low income students to enroll
- Or other creative and innovative ways to support the most vulnerable in our community

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The Superintendent (or equivalent) attests to the following:

- Marin County Public Health Guidelines issued June 18, 2020 and updated August 12, 2020 have been implemented and are detailed in the School Site-Specific Protection Plan.
- [A School Site-Specific Protection Plan \(Updated August 12, 2020\)](#) has been developed, is in place, has been published and posted on the school or district website, will be updated with guidance provided by Marin County Public Health and the California Department of Public Health, **and is included as an attachment in the application.**
- The Superintendent, Head of School (or equivalent or designated staff) has consulted with labor, parents and community organizations as required by the California Department of Public Health. If the school does not have a labor organization the school has consulted with school site staff.
- If this application is for a Private, independent or parochial school(s), a plan is in place to perform COVID-19 testing that includes the following:
 - Surveillance testing of all staff before site-based classroom instruction is resumed, and then no less than once every two months (approximately 50% of staff tested every month).
 - Testing associated with school-based COVID-19 cases, exposures, or outbreaks, following the recommendations of Marin County Public Health.
 - Schools must utilize a COVID-19 testing vendor that offers testing results within 72 hours.
- If this application is for a Public School, our school is coordinating with Public Health on a plan to perform COVID-19 testing that meets Public Health recommendations.
- Our School(s) has/have identified primary and secondary points of contact who will be trained by Marin County Public Health to address concerns around practices, protocols, or potential exposure. These points of contact will serve as liaisons to Public Health, and contact information is identified in the School Site-Specific Protection Plan.
- The Superintendent, Head of School (or equivalent) will follow Public Health Officer and CDPH guidance to determine triggers for switching to distance learning and when to physically close the school to suspend site-based classroom instruction.
- A brief (500 word) overview of the context of the waiver application including the schools unique situation, experience operating student programs during the pandemic*, and how the school will meet the needs of students, teachers, staff and the community is included in the application.
- **Applications and all supporting documents will be submitted to the Public Health Officer through the Marin County Office of Education at PublicHealthWaiver@marinschools.org at least 14 days prior to targeted return to site-based classroom instruction.**

**Priority consideration will be given to schools serving low income communities, schools who primarily conduct instructional activities outdoors, schools who have been early adopters of COVID-19 health and safety protocols with an established a successful record of providing service to students in the Spring and Summer, and schools with a demonstrated commitment to supporting the priority of equity in our community.*

Certification: As an authorized representative (Superintendent, Head of School or equivalent for charter, private, independent or parochial schools) of the school noted in this application, I certify that all conditions above have been met, and that the information provided is truthful and accurate.

Name:	Title:
Superintendent, Head of School (or equivalent) Signature:	Date:

Public Health Officer Authority to grant waivers: The July 17, 2020 California Department of Public Health released the COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year, which includes the following language: *“A waiver of this criteria may be granted by the local health officer for elementary schools to open for in-person instruction. A waiver may only be granted if one is requested by the superintendent (or equivalent for charter or private schools), in consultation with labor, parent and community organizations. Local health officers must review local community epidemiological data, consider other public health interventions, and consult with CDPH when considering a waiver request.”*

Public Health Response:

<u>Approved: (signature)</u>	<u>Denied: (signature)</u>	<u>Date:</u>
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**Pending questions or concerns raised by the California Department of Public Health about application.

Additional Resources:

- [Rethinking Schools: A Public Health Guided Return to Site-Based Classroom Instruction](#) (updated 8.12.20)
- [School Site-Specific Protection Plan](#) (updated 8.12.20)
- [CDPH and Cal/OSHA Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs \(August 3, 2020\)](#)
- [California Department of Education Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools \(June 2020\)](#)
- [CDPH COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year \(July 17, 2020\)](#)

Related CDPH Links:

- [California Public Health Officials Release Guidance on Youth Sports and Elementary School Waivers](#) (CDPH)
- [COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Elementary Education Waiver Process](#) (CDPH)
- [Waiver Letter Template and Cover Form 8.3.20](#) (CDPH)
- [COVID-19 and Reopening of In-Person Learning for Elementary Education Waiver Notice to the California Department of Public Health](#) (CDPH)