



RESCUE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Educating for the Future Together"

2390 Bass Lake Road • Rescue, CA 95672

(530) 677-4461 • FAX (530) 677-0719

www.rescueusd.org

January 18, 2021

Dear RUSD Staff and Families,

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) developed a new guidance document that is a public health directive applying to all public and private schools in California. This document was released on January 14, 2021. Under operative executive orders of the California Health and Safety Code, schools must comply with these orders to limit the spread of COVID-19.

These directives are clear and binding. Unfortunately, these directives make it so we cannot open more fully on January 25, 2021. When the Board made the decision for us to transition to Phase 2 of our full reopening plan, we had no idea this document would prohibit our full reopening. We will remain in hybrid status until the directives allow otherwise.

The major changes in guidelines are as follows:

1. We must complete and post a COVID-19 Safety Plan (CSP) to our website by February 1. (p.7,10)
2. We may comply with guidance from other federal, state, local, and non-governmental sources, to the extent those guidelines are not weaker than or inconsistent with state and local public health directives. (p. 4)
3. Classroom cohorts will now be called Stable Groups. (p. 5)
4. Students in all grade levels TK-12 are required to wear face coverings at all times, while at school, unless exempted. (p. 16)
5. Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, as confirmed by school district health team and therapists, must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it. (p. 16)
6. In order to comply with this guidance, schools must exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one provided by the school. (p. 17)
7. Stable groups could switch schedules or even membership after the end of a quarter, trimester, or semester in ways that support students being able to take additional classes without substantial group mixing. (p. 20)



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8. **Under no circumstances should distance between student chairs be less than 4 feet.** This is the one that makes a full reopening prohibitive. There is no possible way to configure our classrooms and keep chairs 4 feet apart with 24-30 students in a classroom. The most we can fit, after measuring classrooms, is 17 students. This is why we will have to remain in hybrid for the time being, until CDPH relaxes these directives. (p. 21)
 9. **Activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled aerosols such as band and choir practice and performances are permitted outdoors only.** For now, we will not be able to have band, as we cannot move the entire band room outside each day, especially during winter months. (p. 22)
 10. Parents must screen their children daily for COVID-19 symptoms and for exposure to someone with COVID-19 prior to leaving for school. Parents are to keep their child at home if the child is feeling ill or has any symptoms of COVID-19, even if symptoms are very mild, and to get their ill child tested for SARS-Cov2. (p.27)
 11. A close contact is now defined as a person who is within 6 feet from a case for more than 15 minutes cumulative within a 24-hour period, regardless of face coverings. In school situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire stable group, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed, and thus quarantined. (p. 32)

RUSD will continue to be diligent in meeting student needs and helping our students grow and learn despite this setback. **To give the Board an opportunity to discuss this document and the ramifications of it for our district, the Board has called a Special Meeting to be held Wednesday, January 20, at 4:00 pm. It will be entirely by Zoom. Sharon Laurel will publish the zoom link on our website within the 24-hour requirement for special meetings. We welcome your attendance via Zoom. Since it is a special meeting, there will be no other agenda items. Other items will be added to the regularly scheduled meeting on January 26th.**

We want you to know that when CDPH allows us to open more fully, we will do so. To read the entire document, you may click on the link below:

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Consolidated_Schools_Guidance.pdf



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In the meantime, please know we are here to support you and your children. Our teachers and staff care deeply about the growth and well-being of our students. Our district is committed to fostering a culture that promotes the health, safety, and well-being of students, parents and staff. In an effort to continuously support this commitment, RUSD has partnered with Care Solace. Care Solace is an online resource with a live 24/7 concierge meant to assist individuals in finding local mental health related programs and counseling services. Care Solace is a tool for school staff and families to connect with community-based mental healthcare resources and providers. Their proprietary care navigation system taps into a vast database of mental healthcare resources to find carefully vetted local therapists and programs.

School district families and staff may access Care Solace services in two ways:

1. Call (888) 515-0595 to speak with someone from our Concierge team
2. Visit our custom district link: www.caresolace.com/rusd

Care Solace is now available for use by **district families and staff at no cost. Care Solace does not require a name, address, phone number, or date of birth. All information entered on the Care Solace tool is completely confidential and securely stored.**

Please note, this service is an optional resource available by choice and is not mandatory in any way. Care Solace is not an emergency response service or mental health services provider. In the event of a life threatening emergency, please call 9-1-1 or the National Suicide Hotline 1-800-273-8255. If you are interested in seeking counseling-related services at this time, please consider visiting www.caresolace.com/rusd If you or your child needs support, counseling services, or anything else, please reach out to us.

We are here for you. Thank you and let's finish strong.

Most sincerely,

Cheryl Olson