



August 6, 2020

Dear District Superintendent, Charter School Director, or Private School Head of School:

On July 12, 2020, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) placed Sonoma County on its monitoring list. On July 17, 2020 Governor Gavin Newsom announced that if a county has been on the monitoring list within the prior 14 days, a school must conduct distance learning only, until the county has been off the monitoring list for at least 14 days.

In counties on the monitoring list, CDPH guidance allows a district superintendent, private school principal/head of school, or executive director of a charter school (hereinafter superintendent) to apply for a waiver from the local health officer to open an elementary school for in-person instruction. This waiver is applicable only for grades TK-6, even if the grade configuration at the school includes additional grades.

When applying for the waiver, the superintendent must submit to the local health officer evidence of (1) consultation with labor and parent organizations and (2) publication of the elementary school reopening plans on the website of the local educational agency (or equivalent).

The local health officer then reviews the application and reopening plan (along with local community epidemiological data), makes a determination whether to grant or deny the waiver, and consults with CDPH regarding that determination. Elementary schools in counties on the monitoring list within the prior 14 days may not open for in-person instruction until they have received approval of a submitted waiver from the local health officer.

In order to apply for a waiver, please complete and submit the attached Application Cover Form. An application must contain:

- Attestation that the superintendent (equivalent or designated staff) has consulted with all parent and labor organizations at each school site for which an application is being submitted. If no labor organization represents the school site staff, then consultation with school site staff is sufficient.
- Confirmation that elementary school reopening plans have been published on the website of the local educational agency (or equivalent). Reopening plans must address the components in the CDPH guidance for schools and school-based programs (which are also listed in the attached Application Cover Form).

Applications and all supporting documents should be submitted to the local health officer at least 14 days prior to the desired reopening date to schoolwaivers@sonoma-county.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sundari R. Mase MD MPH".

Sundari R. Mase, MD, MPH
Health Officer
Sonoma County Department of Health Services