

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update on School Opening

Just yesterday, legislation was officially proposed to help students across the State get back to school. Nearly 80% of students in California are still in distance learning and have not stepped on a campus since March 2020. Thankfully, we have been open safely in the hybrid schedule since October, and our schools have not played a part in the community transmission of COVID-19. This is primarily due to the safety protocols that we have in place and that our students and staff have modeled.

At the same time, we have been aggressively working to ensure that our faculty and staff have access to the vaccine so that we can help make certain they are safe. El Dorado County has been an exceptional partner in facilitating access to the vaccine and has supported helping our schools open at every step. Locally, our County is doing far more to help schools than nearly any other place in California.

We are carefully examining the proposed re-opening of schools legislation, SB86, and will watch intently to determine if it provides an opportunity to further open our schools and the legislative requirements we need to address. As legislative negotiations go on with the Governor, we anticipate some decisions being made in the next week or so and will keep you informed of what is happening and the potential impact on our District.

Today, the Governor released new California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Guidance on High School Sports and we are analyzing this information very closely. While it is generally good news, for some sports to compete, it will require athletes to take a weekly COVID-19 test. We are already evaluating the details and are committed to finding a path to meet this suddenly imposed requirement as we were given no advanced warning. We will be working with our Administrators, Athletic Directors and Coaches to help provide some clarity on our next steps. We remain committed to returning our student athletes to competition as soon as possible and are working diligently to make this a reality for as many sports as are allowed. We will provide an update early next week on our plans moving forward.

Our Board of Trustees is committed to doing all we can to keep our school environments safe, and we realize the need to increase instructional time for our students as the State allows. We definitely see movement towards opening schools from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and we hope the legislature and the CDPH can provide clear and helpful guidance in a full time return. At a minimum, many districts in the State will only open in hybrid to perhaps 10% of their student population. The question yet to be answered is does this legislation help us who are already open in hybrid move towards full time instruction.

We will keep you updated on the progress of this legislation and what it may mean for our students, staff and schools. We anticipate more clarity over the next week or two.

Below are the key legislators negotiating the school reopening bill. Please feel free to express your thoughts on reopening schools.

Key Legislators:

- Assemblymember Philip Ting: (916) 319-2019 / assemblymember.ting@assembly.ca.gov
Chief of Staff: irene.ho@asm.ca.gov
Legislative Director: shy.forbes@asm.ca.gov
- Senator John Laird: (916) 651-4017 / senator.laird@senate.ca.gov
Chief of Staff: richard.stapler@sen.ca.gov
Legislative Director: michelle.reyes@sen.ca.gov
- Assemblymember Kevin McCarty: (916) 319-2007 / assemblymember.mccarty@assembly.ca.gov
Chief of Staff: maria.alvarez@asm.ca.gov
Legislative Director: cristina.salazar@asm.ca.gov
- Senator Toni Atkins: (916) 651-4039 / senator.atkins@senate.ca.gov
Chief of Staff: nick.hardeman@sen.ca.gov