

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update In-Door Face Covering Rules in Schools

On Friday, February 25, 2022 U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a new rating system to determine if indoor masking should be required. The new system measures the number of Covid patients admitted to hospitals, a hospital's capacity to handle additional Covid cases and new Covid cases in the county. Under the updated guidance and rating system from the CDC, mask mandates are no longer recommended in El Dorado County schools. While the CDC makes recommendations, it does not have the authority to issue COVID-19 public health directives within California. That authority resides with the Governor and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

With the lifting of the statewide indoor mandate, and the improved conditions within El Dorado County, the El Dorado Union High School District adapted its face-covering enforcement protocols based on the changing conditions. Schools continue to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school. In addition, schools shall provide N95 masks to all students and staff upon request. Students shall be directed to wear a face covering upon entering the classroom/indoor setting. Students will not be physically removed from the classroom or receive a discipline consequence to prevent further exclusionary learning loss.

Prior to making the change in the protocol, the District Administration was in communication with Dr. Nancy Williams, Director of El Dorado County Public Health. Administration, through the El Dorado County Office of Education, specifically asked if El Dorado County Health was requiring districts to use exclusion to enforce the CDPH mask guidance. Dr. Williams stated that given the current situation and environment in which we are operating under, she did not oppose our decision to no longer utilize exclusion as a student consequence. In addition, the District Administration asked our insurance provider if we were required to use student exclusion as student consequence in our enforcement protocol, given the current situation and environment, and the answer was no. Both county public health and our insurance provider did not explicitly state we must use the student consequence of exclusion in our mask enforcement protocol.

The Governor and CDPH announced Monday, February 28, 2022 that, regardless of vaccination status, after Friday, March 11, 2022, the universal masking requirement for K-12 and Childcare settings will terminate. Until that date, students will continue to be notified of the requirement to wear a face covering indoors at schools.

We appreciate your continued support of our students during these unprecedented times.