



PCOE

GOLD IN EDUCATION

Gayle Garbolino-Mojica
County Superintendent of Schools

FRAMEWORK FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

FOR THE 2020/2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

This plan is intended for student programs operated directly by the Placer County Office of Education including regional special education, court and community schools as well as Pathways Charter. The plan will be modified as public health guidelines are updated.

www.placercoe.org



Framework for Returning to School 2020/2021 Academic School Year

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Context.....	3
Guiding Principals	4
Timeline.....	5
Health & Safety	6
Daily Logistics	7
Best Practices	9
Key Resources	10
Contact Information.....	10

Please note: This Framework for Reopening Schools will be updated as we receive additional input from all stakeholders (staff, students, parents and community members). The ultimate goal is to see students and staff return for in-person classroom instruction to maximize learning and success for all students, while doing everything reasonably possible to ensure the health and safety of our students, staff and community.

CONTEXT

The onset of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic triggered unprecedented government mandated shelter-at-home orders. Effective March 16, 2020, the Placer County Public Health Officer, in consultation with the Placer County Superintendent of Schools, along with district superintendents and charter school operators, recommended the suspension of in-person classroom instruction for nearly 75,000 students in an effort to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Subsequently, Placer County Public Health issued a countywide [Stay-at-Home Directive](#) on March 19, 2020 suspending all non-essential work. The uncertainty around when state and local health officials would lift shelter-at-home orders prompted a joint decision between the Placer County Public Health Officer and public school leaders to extend distance learning through the remainder of the 2019/2020 academic year.

The Placer County Office of Education (PCOE) operates unique programs serving a variety of students and families. Students are served in Regional Special Education classrooms located on comprehensive school sites, Regional Special Education classrooms located on isolated school sites, and PCOE educational programs located on PCOE school sites. In preparation for the opening of classrooms on isolated school sites and PCOE school sites, the Placer County Office of Education surveyed parents and staff about what was most important to parents before sending their children back to school and to staff before reporting back to the classroom. Regional Special Education programs located on comprehensive school sites will follow the host district's opening framework/plan.

Overwhelmingly, parents are ready to send their students back to school. For many of the programs the Placer County Office of Education provides, distance learning is a challenge for the students and parents. Survey respondents shared challenges such as: limited internet access, childcare limitations, and not feeling prepared to educate their children. The parent survey also captured the top two actions PCOE could do to make the majority of parents feel comfortable when sending their children back to school including:

- 1) Assurances around regular cleaning and disinfecting (68 percent)
- 2) Encouraging and reinforcing handwashing and the use of hand sanitizer (53 percent).

The staff survey reflected similar results to the parent survey, staff are eager to return to school and the workplace with assurances around the availability of hand sanitizer (50 percent). Staff also wanted to ensure PCOE programs are not returning "too soon" and shared feedback about working in close proximity to others (50 percent).

Along with parent and staff feedback, PCOE considered guidance and recommendations from regional, state and federal agencies including Placer County Public Health, the California Department of Education, the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PCOE determined (to the extent possible) whether and how to

implement the guidance and considerations while adjusting to meet the unique needs and circumstances of our local school communities. These actions along with additional community mitigation strategies are outlined in this framework for when PCOE programs and school sites open for the 2020/2021 academic year.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Placer County Office of Education is committed to the following guiding principles in the reopening of our student programs for the 2020/2021 academic year:

1. **Health and Safety** - The health and safety of staff and students is the single highest priority.
2. **Cohorts** - The core operational structure of our school programs is a cohort of students and staff whenever possible. This structure helps to mitigate the spread of germs, enables health providers to trace contacts in the event of an infection, and isolates the need for potential closures.
3. **Physical Distancing** - For some students, the cohort in itself is the physical distancing practice (preschool students and some students with special needs are not expected to maintain six feet distance). For other student groups, physical distancing (six feet) will be maintained whenever possible.
4. **Procedures and Protocols** - Specific safety protocols including daily health self-monitoring, temperature checks as needed, lunch procedures, restroom use procedures, paths of travel, outdoor recreation activities, substitute procedures, will be carefully planned, implemented, monitored and updated on a regular basis.
5. **Academic Success** - In-class instruction provides an effective learning environment for students to meet learning objectives and to access instructional support from caring adults.
6. **Social Emotional Support** – Relationships and in-person connectivity are a critical component of social development for students.

7. **Responsiveness** – The PCOE Student Services Leadership Team is available to interface with sites and Placer County Public Health to answer any questions or concerns that arise. The PCOE Student Services Leadership team will consult with the Placer County Health Officer and utilize California Department of Public Health Guidance for [Schools and School Based Programs](#):

1. Mask and isolate symptomatic student or staff member
2. Notify Health Officer, parents/guardians, staff and community partners
3. If positive for COVID-19, close areas used by positive individual(s)
4. In consultation with the Placer County Health Officer, close classroom or site
5. Engage distance learning model
6. Assess length of closure with the Placer County Health Officer
7. Initiate communications plan
8. Implement cleaning and sanitization strategies
9. Stay in contact with the Placer County Health Officer for re-opening and communicate with parents/guardians, staff and community partners
10. Follow re-opening procedures

TIMELINE

The Placer County Office of Education will reopen programs using the above guidelines and the following best practices and considerations. Many programs will begin the school year in a distance learning model. Return to campus for in-person instruction will be determined following statewide and local health and safety guidance.

2020/2021 Academic School Year

August 7, 2020	All Staff Training
July 1, 2020	Honour Schaps Court School
July 1, 2020	Koinonia Community School
July 20, 2020	Placer County JumpStart
August 10, 2020	Sierra Vista @ Olive Ranch
August 11, 2020	Lynn MacDonald Education Center
August 12, 2020	iCARE Charter School
August 12, 2020	iLearn Academy
August 12, 2020	Onorato Educational Center
September 1, 2020	Tahoe Truckee Community School

HEALTH & SAFETY

Cohorts:

The ability for schools to reopen is based upon the strict understanding that students will be separated into cohorts, meaning:

1. The same group of students are in the same group each day.
2. Whenever possible, students should not change from one cohort to another.
3. Each group should be in a separate room and not mix with other cohorts.
4. Whenever possible, teachers should also remain solely with one group of students.

Health and Safety Protocols:

PCOE student programs will adhere to the following health and safety protocols:

1. Essential Protective Gear (EPG) will be stocked, inventoried and replenished as needed (see below).
2. Daily health self-monitoring will occur.
3. To ensure cohorts do not co-mingle, site administrators and teachers will coordinate and schedule outdoor activities.
4. The use of specific facilities will be defined whenever possible for each cohort (entrances, restrooms, paths of travel to ensure no mixing of cohorts whenever possible).
5. All staff will implement regular cleaning and disinfecting procedures throughout the day.
6. Should a staff member or student exhibit symptoms of illness or COVID-19, be in close contact/exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19, or be diagnosed with COVID-19, PCOE will follow the [Placer County COVID-19 Response Scenarios Health Protocols](#).

Staff Essential Protective Gear (EPG):

All staff will be trained to implement best practices in the use of Essential Protective Gear (EPG) including, but not limited to:

1. Wear a face covering in accordance with [mandates/guidance](#) from California Department of Public Health.
1. Wear gloves when cleaning and disinfecting.
2. Use disinfectant regularly to clean and wipe surfaces and high touch areas.
3. Require hand washing for staff and students upon arrival, before and after meals or snack time, before and after going to the restroom, and regular intervals throughout the day.
4. Instruct students using physical barriers (e.g., face shield, face covering, gloves) if needed.

Face Coverings for Students and Staff:

2. Students and staff will be asked to adhere to [mandates/guidance](#) from California Department of Public Health.
3. Each site will have a supply of face coverings and clear facemasks for anyone who is unable to provide their own.

Cleaning:

1. All school sites will be equipped with cleaning, sanitization and disinfectant supplies (i.e., hand sanitizer, gloves, sanitizing and disinfecting wipes, disinfectant solutions).
2. All staff will be trained to regularly clean, sanitize and disinfect high touch areas and surfaces in their work areas in accordance with the [cleaning and disinfecting procedures](#) described in detail in by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for communities, schools and workplaces.

DAILY LOGISTICS

Snacks and Lunches:

Families will provide appropriate snacks and lunches for their students, packed in clearly marked containers. Parents should provide detailed information on registration forms regarding any special dietary needs and/or allergies. Students who purchase or receive (free and reduced) meals at school will eat with their cohort.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up:

With the goal to limit outside adult-to-student interaction beyond the site staff and students, parents/guardians will be instructed to pick-up and drop-off student(s) in designated areas only.

Staff Training:

Student Services Program Coordinators and Site Principals will review the PCOE Return to School Framework with all staff, along with the context, guiding principles, and health and safety practices described in this plan. An emphasis will be placed on layering community mitigation strategies such as health self-assessments before reporting to work, physical distancing, frequent hand washing and wearing face coverings.

Health & Safety Checks:

Students or staff who are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home from school and other activities and follow the [Placer County Response Scenarios Health Protocols](#). Each site has access to a touchless thermometer, which will be available to all students when needed.

Health Self-Assessment:

Before coming to school or interacting with others, parents and staff will be required to self-assess daily using the following criteria. If the answer to any of the questions below is “yes” student and staff must stay home.

Exposure

1. Do you or your child live with anyone or have you or your child had close contact with anyone with a prolonged cough, fever, flu-like symptoms or who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days?

Symptoms

2. Do you or your child live with anyone or do you or your child have a fever, cough and/or shortness of breath? For children and adults, fever is 100.4 degrees or above using a thermometer.
3. Do you or your child live with anyone or do you or your child have any other signs of communicable illness such as a cold, flu, rash or inflammation?
4. Do you or your child live with anyone or have you or your child experienced diarrhea or vomiting (within the past 24 hours)?

Should a staff member or student exhibit symptoms of illness or COVID-19, be in close contact/exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19, or be diagnosed with COVID-19, PCOE will follow the [Placer County COVID-19 Response Scenarios Health Protocols](#).

Signs of Illness During the School Day:

Students and staff will be monitored for signs of illness throughout the day including:

- Fever or chills*
- Cough*
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing*
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If a staff member or student has any one of the first three symptoms* (fever or chills, cough or shortness of breath), they will be sent home immediately. Those exhibiting any of the other above symptoms will be monitored, required to wear a face covering and may be sent home early.

Parents/guardians are required to and must agree to come pick up their child without delay when called.

Transportation:

iCARE students from the Auburn area will be transported on the school bus using physical distancing guidelines. Students will be instructed to follow physical distancing guidelines when utilizing public transportation to and from school.

PCOE Regional Programs:

All parents will need to follow their district of residence transportation policies. PCOE is working with local school district transportation leaders to explore opportunities for cohort-based transportation models.

Recreation Breaks and Recess:

School site administrators and staff will coordinate schedules so that each cohort is able to participate in outdoor recreation as weather and conditions permit.

School Visitors:

School visitors, parent volunteers and guests on campus will be permitted by appointment only and will be expected to follow all health and safety protocols.

BEST PRACTICES

Administrators and staff will make every effort to implement and share best practices including:

1. Implement physical distancing best practices
2. Regular safety meetings with all staff
3. Have clearly designated family curbside drop-off/pick-up station
4. Support and encourage self-monitoring
5. Stay home if showing or experiencing any sign of sickness
6. Post signage of COVID 19, risk assessment and preventative measures
7. Parent volunteers are not permitted at this time
8. Restrict activities and visitors, including volunteers and parent tours
9. Require students and staff to conduct handwashing or sanitizing as their first activity upon arrival each day and regularly throughout the day
10. Stock cleaning supplies for each cohort/classroom
11. Have a stock of face coverings in the event that a child or staff member exhibits symptoms
12. Clean and disinfect frequently
13. Keep play materials on site; and not allow equipment to go home with students
14. Keep emergency contact information up to date.

KEY RESOURCES

For Students, Families and School Communities:

1. [Placer County Coronavirus Webpage](#)
2. [Placer County Office of Education Crisis Response Webpage](#)
3. [Placer County COVID-19 Response Scenarios Health Protocols](#)
4. [CDC Guidance for Childcare, Schools and Youth Programs](#)
5. [CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)
6. [CDC Guidance on Face Coverings](#)
7. [CDC Guidance on Physical Distancing](#)
8. [CDC Guidance on Hand Washing](#)
9. [California Department of Education Guidance for Schools for the 2020/2021 School Year](#)
10. [California Department of Public Health Guidance for Schools for the 2020/2021 School Year](#)
11. PCOE Childcare Referrals for Essential Workers: childcare@placercoe.org
12. [PCOE Framework for Returning to School - Spanish Translation](#)

For PCOE Staff

1. [PCOE Employee Return to Workplace Facilities Plan](#)
2. [Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(FFCRA\)](#)
3. [Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(FFCRA\) Frequently Asked Questions](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about this overview document, staffing and logistics, please contact your school principal or coordinator. You may also email PCOEprograms@placercoe.org.