

Dear SCCS Families,

Please find a letter from all County Superintendents below. This letter outlines county safety protocols and vaccination efforts as we prepare for school to begin. As we all eagerly look forward to the start of a more normal school year, these health and safety protocols support our collective goal: **to ensure students stay healthy and all of our schools remain open**. Tonight, we have a webinar where families can hear our plans and ask questions. Look for more communication from the district and your principal in the coming week.

You can join tonight's webinar at 6pm at the following link:

<https://sccs-net.zoom.us/j/83999989203?pwd=ZmlwMnZsbTJLZVZub1BsNkFmQ09OQT09>

Passcode: SCCS

Best regards,
Kris Munro
Superintendent

Date: August 2, 2021

To: Families of Santa Cruz County

Re: Full-time in-person school, new masking guidance, vaccinations.

Dear Families of Santa Cruz County,

We are in an exciting moment for all of our schools as this summer draws to close. Every Santa Cruz County school is opening for full-time in-person learning this fall thanks to a heroic effort on the part of educators, support staff, students and their families. It's a milestone that should bring us all joy after the past year and a half.

Another recent milestone is also worth celebrating: More than 50% of eligible students in Santa Cruz County, ages 12-17, are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. More than 60% have received at least one dose. Any eligible students who are not yet vaccinated are urged to do so, and we are collaborating to host several additional vaccination clinics for students in the weeks ahead. To pre-register and provide consent, visit sccoe.link/studentvax, we will be notifying you next week via email once registration opens. If you completed consent previously, we ask that you provide consent again in the new school year.

But even as we celebrate our successes, we must not become complacent. The more infectious Delta variant of COVID-19 is spreading at alarming rates locally and statewide. Our priority amid

another surge is to keep our classrooms open. To do so, we need to learn from our success from this past spring at preventing on-campus transmission and keep safety protocols in effect.

All schools in Santa Cruz County are required to adhere to school guidance from the California Department of Public Health. CDPH guidance requires all who are indoors within schools to wear masks. Masks are optional while outdoors. If students have a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask, parents can work with their physician to request an exemption. According to CDPH, students exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, 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. The full guidance can be viewed online at the [CDPH website](#). The CDPH is soliciting feedback on the guidance through its [Safe Schools for All Hub](#), and has indicated it will reevaluate its guidance by November 1.

While California's school masking policy isn't up to county or district leaders, we understand and support the policy as a measure to keep our classrooms open and our communities safe. Masking and other safety measures protect everyone, including students still too young to get vaccinated. The [CDC](#) and The American Association of Pediatrics [recommend masking](#) indoors in schools for all above age 2, regardless of vaccination status, because of the measure's demonstrated effectiveness at reducing the transmission of COVID-19.

This past year and a half has been among the most challenging periods in the history of public education, and we all hope the worst of the pandemic is behind us. We have come far, and have much of which to be proud of. Educators and districts have joined together, shared resources and support, and collaborated like never before. We must all do our part to continue our momentum, keep our classrooms open, and keep our community safe.

Yours in education and equity,

Eric Gross, Superintendent, Pacific Elementary School District
Mike Heffner, Superintendent, Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District
Tanya Krause, Superintendent, Scotts Valley Unified School District
Daisy Morales, Superintendent, Live Oak School District
Kris Munro, Superintendent, Santa Cruz City School
Michelle Rodriguez, Superintendent, Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools
Chris Schiermeyer, Superintendent, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District
Michelle Stewart, Superintendent, Happy Valley Elementary School District
Megan Tresham, Superintendent, Mountain Elementary School District
Scott Turnbull, Superintendent, Soquel Union Elementary School District