



ORCUTT Union School District

Where a Dedicated Staff Means Kids Come First

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September 10, 2021

Hello Orcutt USD Families,

We are so thrilled that we have been able to open our schools this year for full time, full day instruction. Thank you for your continued support as we navigate the new health requirements. Each decision we make as a district is based on what is best for students, including how we can continue to keep our students in school and keep our classrooms open.

A few changes have happened in the past week that I wanted to update you on.

The first change is we received updated guidance from the California Department of Public Health with regards to quarantine requirements and also new information on sports and extracurricular activities.

When a student or staff member receives a positive test result, they are required to quarantine out of school for 10 days at least, unless they have symptoms in which case they are required to isolate until they no longer have symptoms.

When we receive information on a positive test result for a student or staff member, our team works with the school site or department to identify individuals who might be considered a close contact. A close contact is defined as a person who was within 6 feet of the positive case more than 15 minutes over a 24 hour period.

If a close contact is vaccinated, as long as they are asymptomatic they can continue to attend school without testing.

If a close contact is unvaccinated and both parties were wearing a mask, a modified quarantine becomes an option for students only. Staff members are required to quarantine. A modified quarantine allows for the student to continue to attend school in person, as long as they participate in at least twice weekly testing and also quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports and activities within the community setting.

If universal masking was not in place, a full quarantine is required for all students that were affected.

Our district continues to work closely with the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department to ensure compliance with the current requirements and health orders.

This week, we received our first shipment of BinaxNOW antigen rapid result testing kits. Due to the nationwide shortage on testing kits, we aren't sure when we will receive a second shipment but we plan to begin using these this week to test students that are identified as close contacts. We also have a traditional PCR test kit which we will use for students that test positive using the antigen test. I know some of our families have had to seek testing in our community and that has been challenging for some and I'm glad we now have some resources we offer to our families. Hopefully we will continue to receive testing kits and we can continue to offer this service. We are looking at other locally produced tests as well.

If your child is identified as a close contact, the school site administrator will reach out to you that day to let you know. You will also receive information on how to register for the on-site testing, and how to give parental consent for testing.

In any case, if your child misses school because they are quarantined, please contact the school office to arrange for a short-term independent study agreement.

Last week we also received new guidance for sports and extracurricular activities. Weekly testing is only required for students that participate in identified activities indoors. Face coverings would pose a choking hazard if worn during these particular activities and therefore cannot be worn. The sports affected include competitive cheer, swim/dive (indoors), wrestling, and gymnastics. The weekly testing requirement also applies to the playing of musical instruments that cannot be done with a face coverings such as wind or brass instruments. No testing is required if these activities take place outdoors or if modified face coverings and bell coverings are used and a distance of at least 6 feet is maintained. Absent those conditions, weekly testing is required of all individuals, including those fully vaccinated.

We will work closely with our team to make accommodations, and if weekly testing is required of students we will notify those students and parents affected. Fortunately, our weather right now is nice and we are able to hold these activities outdoors but we may need to implement testing later in the year when that is no longer a possibility.

Thank you again for your patience, grace, and understanding as we continue to navigate the challenges of this Pandemic. I continue to be so grateful to be a part of this district and this community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Holly Edds
Superintendent