



ORCUTT Union School District

Where a Dedicated Staff Means Kids Come First

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Hello Orcutt Union School District Community,

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year. My name is Dr. Holly Edds and I feel so fortunate to serve as the Superintendent of this incredible school district.

Welcome to a new school year, as I have visited campuses over the past week I love hearing the laughter and seeing students engaged in learning all the way from our Transitional Kindergartens to our high school seniors.

Just to share a little about myself, I am beginning my twenty eighth year in education, my nineteenth year in this district, and my third as superintendent. I have also served as a site principal and assistant superintendent here in this district. Prior to coming to Orcutt, I also worked in the King City Union School District, Paso Robles Public Schools, and San Miguel Joint Union School Districts as a teacher and administrator.

My husband and I are the parents of two children, both of whom went through Orcutt Schools and one of whom is still a student here in the district. The reason I chose this district is because of the incredible staff we have and the amazing community in which we live. Orcutt has provided so much to our family and it truly is a special place. Our dedicated staff here in OUSD strives to support every one of our students and our families and truly is a district where every decision we make is what is best for our students.

The past few years have been challenging for everyone. I cannot thank this incredible community enough for the support you have given us through the twists and turns of our very first, and hopefully last, pandemic. I appreciate the leadership our Board of Trustees continues to provide and the hard work of our team which is the reason we weathered this storm.

As a district, we will continue to follow the current K-12 Schools Guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department as we are required to do so by law. They have both indicated that the guidance for this school year is in alignment with guidance for the general public and they don't anticipate this will change.

In our meeting earlier this week, the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department shared the latest COVID-19 protocols. Students and staff are no longer required to quarantine after exposure to a person that has tested positive for COVID-19. You will continue to be notified if your student is exposed, and it is recommended that they test 3-5 days after exposure.

If students show symptoms, they are asked to stay home and can return once symptoms have resolved and they have a negative COVID-19 test. For our students and staff that test positive for COVID-19, we do require a negative observed test to return to campus. We continue to offer drop-in antigen testing from 7:00-8:30 a.m. at Orcutt Junior High School on school days through Labor Day. We are still working on details for how we will offer observed testing and will keep you posted on any changes that will occur after Labor Day but it is our intent to make that available for our families.

The California Department of Public Health is shifting from the use of PCR tests to Antigen tests. They are encouraging the use of Over the Counter testing as well. We have had multiple drive-through distribution opportunities for the Over the Counter Tests over the past 12 months, including one the week before school began to provide resources to our students and staff as another tool to help keep our community safe. We have additional Over the Counter COVID-19 tests available for students and have made them available at our district office and school offices. You can also pick up Over the Counter tests during drop-in testing before school in the morning between 7:00-8:30 a.m.

At this time, there are no mandates in place for face coverings or COVID-19 vaccinations and we will keep you updated if that changes. The use of face coverings continues to be strongly recommended, especially during times of high community transmission. We have masks available in our school offices for students and staff upon request. We will of course continue to respect those that choose to continue to mask for a variety of reasons by their own personal choice.

We appreciate our volunteers and special visitors to our school campuses. Our volunteer and visitor blueprint remains unchanged from the spring of last year and is posted on our district website. This blueprint follows the requirements for staff to be onsite, and are in effect during the compulsory school day, during regular school hours. This guidance is aligned with the California Department of Public Health requirements for staff - volunteers and visitors must show proof of vaccination or proof of an observed negative test within the past 72 hours. Additionally, regular volunteers such as someone who volunteers in a classroom on a weekly basis, must participate in weekly surveillance testing just like our school staff. This testing can take place at the school site, using an over the counter test we provide. We appreciate your understanding and expect our volunteer blueprint to remain in place until the current requirements for staff are changed by CalOSHA.

If you haven't already done so, I would encourage you to download the Parent Square app so you can get updates on what is happening in our district, and your student's school and classroom. You can select how and when you'd like to receive information and can also communicate with school staff through the app. If you're on Social Media, we also post information on our Facebook and Instagram pages and of course we have a district website where you can find additional information about our programs.

We are excited to begin a brand new school year and look forward to working with you as our educational partners. Thank you again for your continued support and thank you for making our community such a fantastic place to work and live! Welcome to the 2022-23 school year - we are so glad you are a part of our OUSD family.

Sincerely,

Holly Edds

Dr. Holly Edds,
Superintendent