

Sierra Sands Unified School District

COVID-19



School Site Plan for Pierce Elementary School

674 N. Gold Canyon Rd.

Ridgecrest, CA 93555

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Implementation of COVID-19 School Plan

Sierra Sands Unified School District's goal is to prioritize the reopening of our schools as safely and as quickly as possible given the many known and established benefits of in-person learning. In order to enable this and assist schools with their day-to-day operations, it is important to adopt and implement actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 inside the school and out in the community. The district has utilized guidance documentation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Kern County Public Health Department (KCPHD), the California Department of Education (CDE) and Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS) to develop this school site plan in conjunction with site administration at **Pierce Elementary School**. It is reasonable to expect that the protocols in this document will change as local conditions change. This plan will also be a part of our school site safety plan.

Out of an abundance of caution, Sierra Sands USD will uphold procedures that are equal to or greater than the guidelines. Any general questions or concerns on the district COVID-19 guidelines the school has implemented should be directed to Bryan Auld, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and COVID-19 Coordinator for Sierra Sands USD at 760-499-1620. **Questions directly related to the site should be directed to the Principal, Shyanne Ledford, at 760-499-1670.**





Health and Safety Protocols

Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to outline the procedures the school will follow once they return to campuses to provide in-person support services and/or instruction.

The use of face masks and physical distancing, in addition to other preventative measures such as sanitation and washing of hands, remains the best defense against the spread of COVID-19 within schools and offices.



Face Coverings

What is a cloth face covering? A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. It can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen. A cloth face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand.

How well do cloth face coverings work to prevent spread of COVID-19? There is scientific evidence to suggest that use of cloth face coverings by the public during a pandemic could help reduce disease transmission. Their primary role is to reduce the release of infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19 but feels well. Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing, washing hands, and staying home when ill, but they may be helpful when combined with these primary interventions.

How should I care for a cloth face covering? It's a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily. Have a bag or bin to keep cloth face coverings in until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face. Discard cloth face coverings that: • No longer cover the nose and mouth • Have stretched out or damaged ties or strap • Cannot stay on the face • Have holes or tears in the fabric.

Face coverings are strongly encouraged for young children between two years of age, second grade, and for special needs students if they can be worn properly. A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear them properly. The following outlines face covering requirements while at school or on school transportation.

<u>Age</u>	<u>Face Covering Requirement</u>
Under 2 years old	No
TK - 2 nd grade	Yes, unless exempt
3 rd grade – High School	Yes, unless exempt

** The school office can provide either a cloth or disposable face mask/face shield upon request.*

Face Covering Exceptions

The district has identified from the state guidance the following categories of *exemptions from wearing a face covering* applicable in the school setting:[1]

- Persons younger than two years old. These very young children must not wear a face covering because of the risk of suffocation.
- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.

- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

[1]https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Guidance-for-Face-Coverings_06-18-2020.pdf

There will need to be a medical note kept on file at the school office regarding the face covering exception. The medical note must come from a licensed medical provider. (M.D., D.O., P.A. or N.P.)

Information regarding face covering exemption forms can be found on the school district website.

Refusal to Wear a Face covering

Facial coverings are required for all students' grades TK through 12. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has issued guidance that any student who refuses to wear a face covering who does not have an exemption be required to remain in distance learning from home.



Physical Distancing

All students and staff are expected to practice physical distancing to the greatest extent possible. School sites will develop an arrival and departure procedure to ensure distancing. Student desks will be six-feet apart in every classroom. Student and staff movement during the school day will be restricted in an effort to maintain distance. Restrooms and other smaller enclosed spaces will have a very limited maximum occupancy to maintain a safe distance. While we recognize that there will be instances when students and/or staff unintentionally come within six-feet of one another, the fact that both persons will be wearing a face covering will limit the likelihood of transmission.

Staff Surveillance Testing



All district employees are required to participate in surveillance testing. The surveillance testing schedule will ensure all staff are tested once every 60 days. Additional testing will be made available if required for contact tracing.



Hand Washing

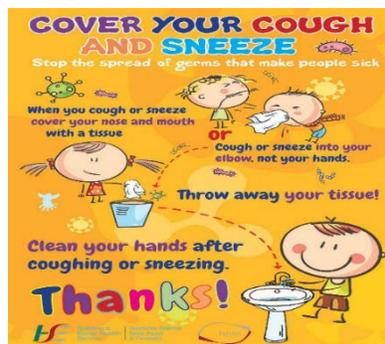
Students and staff are encouraged to wash their hands frequently. Hand sanitizer is recommended when soap and water are not available. Hand sanitizer will be available at multiple locations on each school site including each classroom.

At a minimum, students and staff should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the following times:

- Upon arrival to a campus or workspace
- Before and after eating
- When entering a classroom
- After using the restroom
- After using a tissue to blow their nose or coughing into their hands

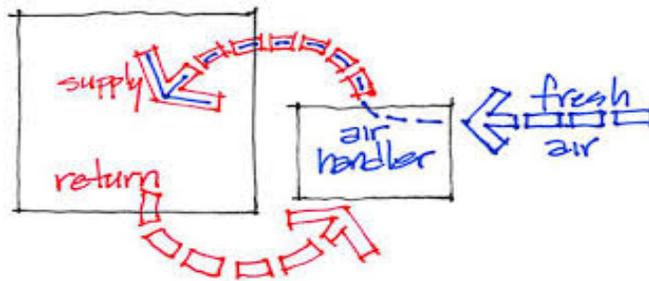
Coughing or Sneezing

All students and staff are reminded to use the inside of their elbow as a barrier when coughing or sneezing.

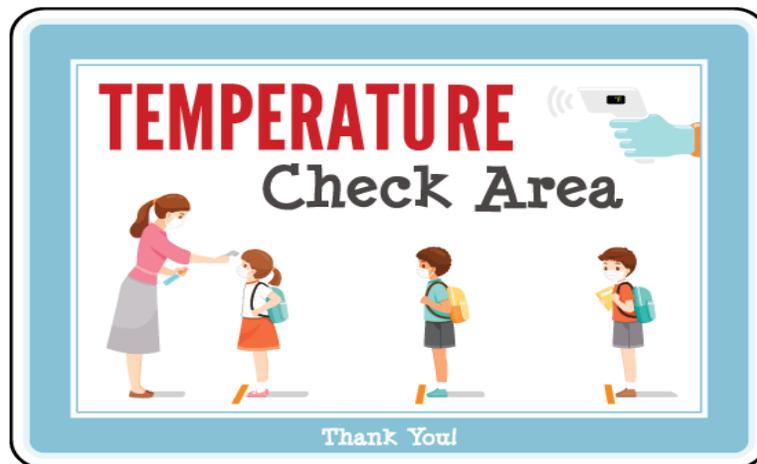


HVAC Ventilation and Air Purification

The district is committed to providing the safest equipment available for reducing the risk of transmission. Research has determined that the virus travels through ventilation systems that do not allow for high efficiency filters. The highest rated filtration system is the MERV 13 HVAC filter. After having conducted an inventory, the district has determined that approximately 90% of our HVAC systems can and will run MERV 13 air filters. In the few spaces where the HVAC system cannot operate properly with a MERV 13, the district will ensure that a MERV 8 filter is used. The MERV 8 filter is an industry standard and is only less effective than the MERV 13. In addition, the district will determine if/where additional portable filtration appliances will need to be installed.



What Families and Students Can Expect on Campus



Active Screening

While sites are required to provide active screening, staff and students will participate in these steps:

1. COVID-19 screening questions:
 - In the last 14 days have you or anyone in your household had close contact with someone who has or is suspected of having COVID-19?
 - In the last 72 hours, have you experienced any of the following symptoms?
 - Fever (100.4 or higher), headache, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, chills, muscle aches, loss of taste and smell, gastrointestinal (nausea, vomiting or diarrhea)?
2. Staff will take the students temperature using a non-contact thermometer.
3. The student will be cleared if they do not have any related symptoms.
4. If the student shows COVID-19 related symptoms, they will not be permitted to enter school facilities. Please refer to the *Positive Response Protocols* listed below.

Passive Screening

While sites are required to conduct passive screening, staff and students will need to follow these steps:

1. Answer COVID-19 screening questions before student drop off or bus pickup:
 - In the last 14 days have you or anyone in your household had close contact with someone who has or is suspected of having COVID-19?
 - In the last 72 hours, have you experienced any of the following symptoms?
 - Fever (100.4 or higher), headache, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, chills, muscle aches, loss of taste and smell, gastrointestinal (nausea, vomiting or diarrhea)



Positive Response Protocols:

Below are the California Department of Public Health's guidelines for when a student, teacher or staff member has symptoms, is a contact or someone infected or is diagnosed with COVID-19.

	Student or Staff with:	Action	Communication
1.	COVID-19 Symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, loss of taste or smell, difficulty breathing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Send home · Recommend testing (If positive, see #3, if negative, see #4) · School and classroom remain open 	No action needed
2.	Close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Send home · Quarantine for 14 days from last exposure · Recommend testing (but will not shorten 14 day quarantine) · School and classroom remain open 	Consider school community notification of a known contact
3.	Confirmed COVID-19 Case infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Notify the local public health department · Isolate case and exclude from school for 10 days from symptom onset or test date · Identify contacts, quarantine and exclude exposed contacts (likely entire cohort) for 14 days after the last date the case was present at school while infectious · Recommend testing of contacts, prioritize symptomatic contacts (but will not shorten 14 day quarantine) · Disinfection and cleaning of classroom and primary spaces where case spent significant time · School remains open 	School community notification of a known case

4.	Tests negative after symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · May return to school 3 days after symptoms resolve · School and classroom remain open 	Consider school community notification if prior awareness of testing
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* A contact is defined as a person who is less than 6 feet from a case for a cumulative of more than 15 minutes in a single day. In some school situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed, particularly if people have spent time together indoors.

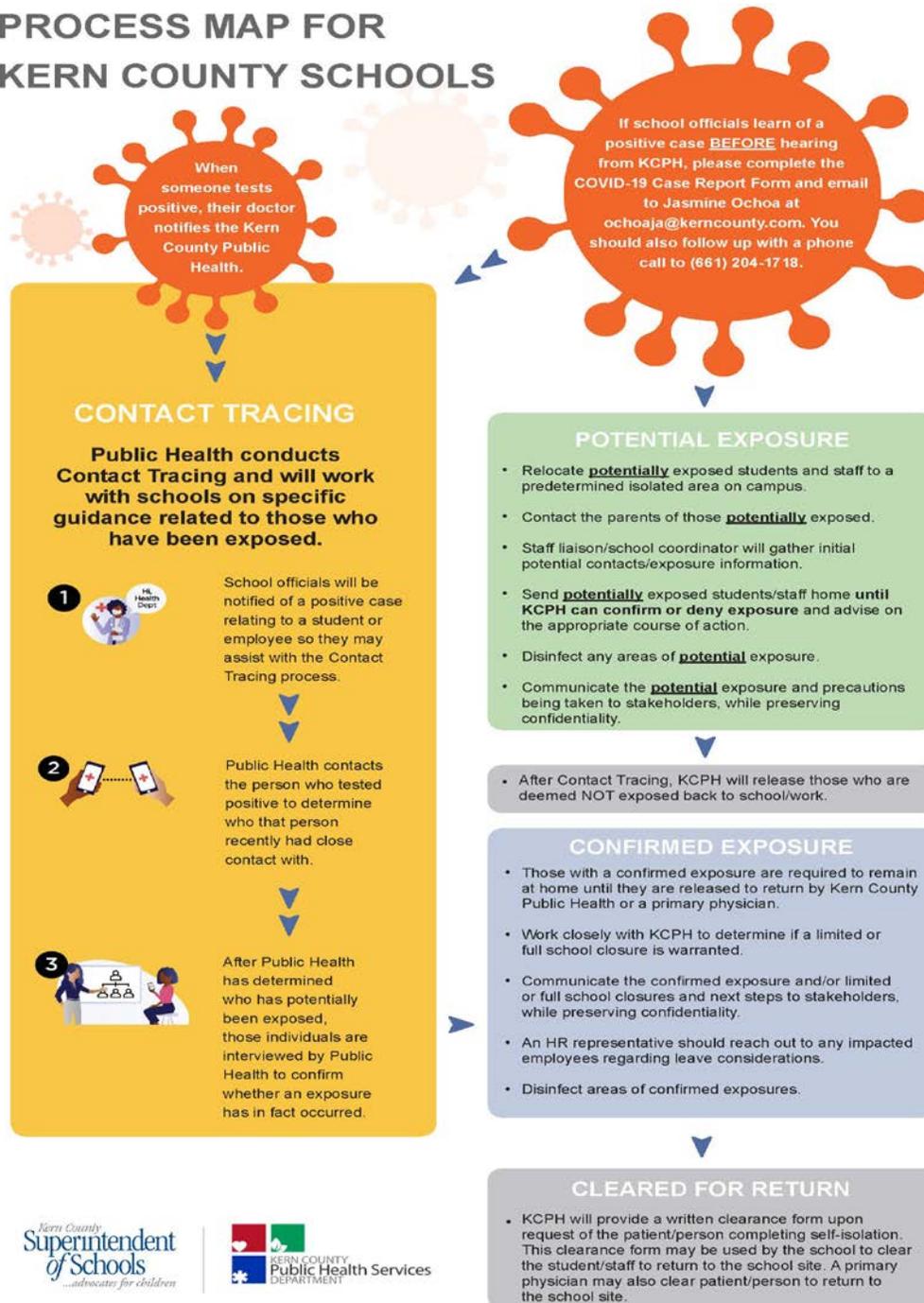
** A cohort is a stable group with fixed membership that stays together for all courses and activities (e.g., lunch, recess, etc.) and avoids contact with other persons or cohorts.

Contact Tracing Protocols

Upon a confirmed COVID-19 case the school site will follow the reporting protocol established by Kern County Department of Public Health (KCDPH).

- Document the confirmed case
- Investigate and identify potential exposure and contact with others
- Report findings to KCDPH

PROCESS MAP FOR KERN COUNTY SCHOOLS



School Reopening Protocol:

A School district may elect to reopen for in-person instruction when Kern County has been in the State's Red Tier for 14 days. In the event the county goes back on the monitoring list after returning to in-person instruction, the district would not be required to stop in-person instruction.



School Closure Protocol:

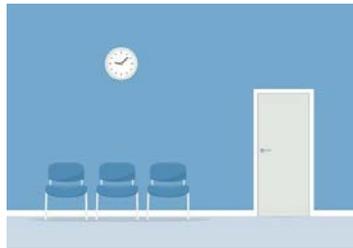
When school districts open for in-person instruction, full or partial closures due to confirmed COVID cases are recommended based on the following:

When to Close a Classroom	 When there is one positive case in a classroom.
When to Close a School	 When multiple classes OR 5% of students/staff have confirmed cases.*
When to Close a District	 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19.*

*Within a 14-day period



Once a classroom, school, or school district has been closed due to COVID cases, typically reopening may occur after 14 days and the following have occurred: Cleaning & disinfection, contact tracing investigation, and in consultation with Kern County Public Health.



CARES Room

The CARES room is a designated space for students who develop or show systems related to COVID-19 during the school day. The following steps will take place to support the student and uphold social distancing protocols and state guidelines.

- After notifying the office, a paraprofessional will escort the student to the CARES room.
- The CARES room is located in the office and the student must remain there until picked up.
- While in the CARES room, the student will primarily be supervised by the office staff and/or the principal.
- The student's parent will be called immediately to pick up their student. Once in the school parking lot please call the school office at 760-499-1670 and remain in your vehicle. Your student will be escorted out to you by a staff member.

Transportation



The district will have limited transportation due to the social distancing guidelines and as such is currently limited to transporting students with acute needs.

School buses will be disinfected between each bus run to protect student passengers and staff.

All transportation employees will be required to wear face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines. School bus monitors may wear face shields on school buses when assisting special needs students or as needed for pedagogical or developmental reasons. School bus drivers may wear a face shield to help students while boarding or exiting the bus; however, a mask is required for driving as face shields may distort vision.

Routine management of student facemask usage while on school buses will be as follows:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Face Covering Requirement</u>
Under 2 years old	No
TK - 2 nd grade	Yes, unless exempt
3 rd grade – High School	Yes, unless exempt

*** A face shield is an acceptable alternative for children in this cohort who cannot wear them properly.*

Should a student show up to a school bus stop or come out for transport during curb-to-curb service without a face mask, then the school bus/van driver or monitor will provide the student with a disposable mask to avoid exclusion.

When a student's personal face mask becomes damaged or broken and is unusable the bus driver or monitor will be pleased to provide that student with a disposable mask and place their personal mask in a brown paper bag.

Non-alcohol hand sanitizer will be offered to all students by the bus monitor to use before students will board the school bus at their bus stop and at the school site when going home.

On morning bus routes, buses will be loaded back to front to ensure social distancing and to reduce student exposure to COVID-19. On afternoon bus routes buses will be loaded according to our drop off schedule with students getting off last loaded in the back of the bus. Students living in the same household may sit together in a seat.

Arrival and Departure Procedures



Purpose

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases **Pierce Elementary School** will implement the following procedures to assure social distancing and screening guidelines are upheld.

Arrival (on time, at the start of the school day)

<i>Arrival by Car</i>	<i>Arrival by Walking</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull through the drop off area by entering near the preschool. Please stay in the vehicle. • Do not park in a lot as we cannot screen parked cars in the lots. • All students will be screened by Pierce staff. Do not let the student out of the vehicle until they have been screened by a Pierce staff member. • Students that have passed the screening will proceed to the designated hub areas. Adults and/or non-Pierce students or staff are asked not to exit the vehicles and not to enter campus. • Students that have not passed the screening will not be permitted on campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be screened at or near the crosswalk • If the student passes the screening, the crossing guard will escort the student across the street or they will be able to pass the crosswalk. Adults and/or non-Pierce students are asked not to cross with the student and not to pass the crosswalk area. • If the student does not pass, the responsible party they are with will be notified and the student will not be permitted to enter the campus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unaccompanied students that do not pass the health screening will be escorted to the CARES room to wait for pick up by an adult. • Students that have passed the screening will proceed to the designated hub areas.

Arrival (late)

Late arrivals must call the school office at 760-499-1670 and a staff member will come out and screen them in the vehicle. If the student passes, a staff member will escort them to the hub. If the student does not pass the screening, they will not be permitted on campus.

Departure (regular, at the end of the school day)

- Pick up your student by:
 - Waiting in the car pick up lane
 - Waiting on the grassy area in front of the school. **Please do not crowd around the exit gate**, and please maintain social distancing of 6ft between non-family members. **We will not open the exit gate to begin student dismissal until all non-students are on the grass.**
- Students that walk will be escorted to the crosswalk area by a staff member.
- Do not enter the campus for any reason. If you need to speak with a staff member, call the school office to make this request.

Early Student Pick Up – *If a student must be picked up early, before regularly scheduled departure, the following procedures are in place.*

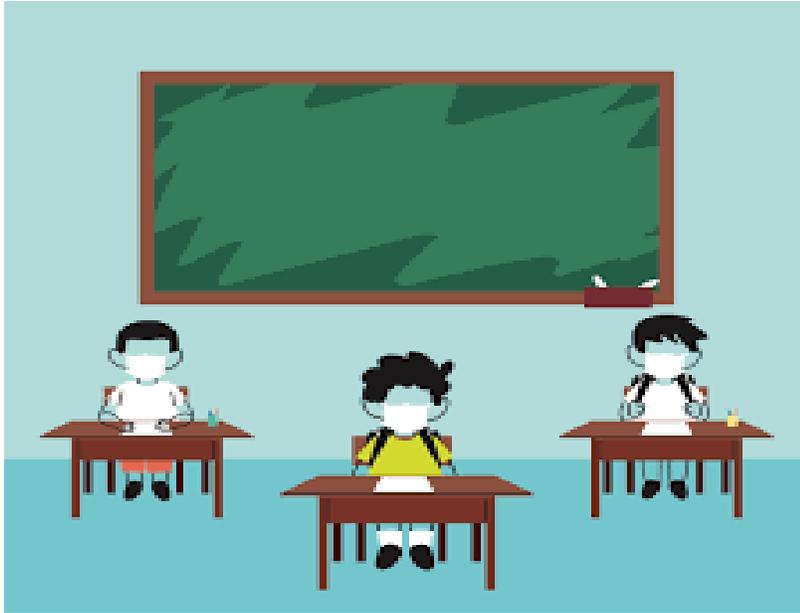
- Students will not be released from the classroom or called to the office until the adult picking them up is physically on campus in their vehicle. **Please plan for pick up to take approximately 10 minutes.**
- You will need to call the school office when you arrive at 760-499-1670 and a staff member will escort your student out to you.
- You will be asked to show a state-issued identification card and/or you may be asked to sign your student out on a clipboard.



Visitors/Volunteers on Campus:

To ensure the safety of staff and students and to uphold KCDPH guidelines, the campus is closed to visitors and volunteers. If parents need to pick up their student during the school day they will follow the above listed protocol.

Classroom Protocols



Classroom Space:

To reduce possibilities for infection, students will remain in the same space and in cohorts as small and consistent as practicable, including for recess and lunch when safely able to do so. We will also be minimizing the movement of students and teachers/staff as much as practicable in the classroom and maximizing the space between seating and desks. Sneeze guards will be installed on the students' desks as a protection barrier. The teacher and other staff desks will be at least six feet away from student desks. There will be markings on classroom floors to promote distancing or desks will be arranged in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact and also to indicate directional paths.

- To the greatest extent possible, desks will be spaced 6 feet apart
- To the greatest extent possible, students will social distance
 - Special exceptions may be needed to serve students with acute needs
- Walking lanes will be marked
- Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized at the end of each school day
- Manipulatives used for learning will be stored in personal bins and are not to be shared
- Backpacks, lunch pails, or other personal items are not allowed at this time.

Food Service



Purpose

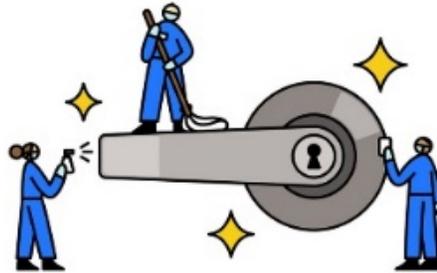
In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases Pierce Elementary School will be implementing the following procedures to assure social distancing guidelines are upheld. ***Please note, if your student has a medical need or food related allergy affected by this plan*** contact our Child Nutrition Services Director, Kris Groves at 499-1881 or email her at kgroves@ssud.org.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided by food services. The drinking fountains have been turned off throughout the school, but bottled water will be provided. Students will not be allowed to bring their own bottled water or personal drink containers.

Breakfast – All students will receive a “Grab and Go” breakfast from a kiosk when they leave campus to be eaten the next morning before arriving to school. Breakfast will not be eaten on the Pierce campus.

Lunch - Students in **TK and Kindergarten** will receive a “Grab and Go” lunch from a kiosk when they depart campus to eat at home as they have a shorter school day. Students in **1st- 5th grades** will eat on campus, in their classroom as their day is longer.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols



Purpose

The CDC says the major route of COVID-19 transmission is through droplets that are expelled when we cough, sneeze or talk. But the virus can live on surfaces for hours and possibly days.

- Schools are focusing their cleaning efforts on high-touch surfaces like doorknobs, bathroom doors and sink areas multiple times a day.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be used by students upon entrance to the campus, in their classroom and in the restroom.
- Bathrooms well-stocked with paper towels and soap as well.
- EPA registered cleaning products will be used by staff on a daily basis to sanitize all areas on campus along with electrostatic sprayers.

Mental Health Support/Additional Family Resources



Purpose

The following are social, emotional, and mental health resources available for our students and families. We welcome and encourage anyone who may be struggling or know of someone who is, to reach out for support. We are all stronger together.

Mental Health Supports:

School Counselors

Our School Counselor(s), **Ms. Megan Cordeiro** will be on campus during regular school hours, **9:00am to 3:15pm**, for both in-person support for those students on campus and virtually for students who are not. To speak with our counselor or to set up an appointment please call **760-499-1670** or email **mstrickland@ssusd.org**.

Additional Supports

This year has been extremely difficult for people of all ages due to the many uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Many Californians are out of work and under serious financial stress. Children are partaking in virtual learning, which has come with unforeseen challenges and setbacks. **Parents Anonymous®** offers a NO COST Parent and Youth Helpline which provides immediate emotional support from a trained and compassionate helpline counselor. Open 12 hours every day: Monday-Sunday 8 am – 8 pm CALL, TEXT OR CHAT in any language.



**California
Parent & Youth
Helpline**
1-855-4A PARENT
1-855-427-2736

8am-8pm Monday-Sunday

CALL, TEXT OR LIVE CHAT NOW
FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT OR TO
SIGN UP FOR ONLINE PARENTING
SUPPORT GROUPS

caparentyouthhelpline.org
info@caparentyouthhelpline.org

Asking for Help is a Sign of Strength®



**California
Parent & Youth
Helpline**
1-855-4A PARENT
1-855-427-2736

8am-8pm Lunes-Domingo

LLAME, ENVÍE UN MENSAJE DE TEXTO O CHATEE
EN VIVO AHORA PARA RECIBIR APOYO
EMOCIONAL O PARA REGISTRARSE EN
GRUPOS VIRTUAL DE APOYO PARA PADRES

caparentyouthhelpline.org
info@caparentyouthhelpline.org

Pedir Ayuda Es Un Signo De Fortaleza®

Crisis Stabilization Unit

760-463-2880, 1141 Chelsea St.

College Community Health (for students with MediCal)

760 499-7406, 1400 N. Norma St. #133

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Clinic Mental Health

760 499-3863, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Southern Sierra Mental Health

760-446-6404, 105 E. Sydnor

Resources for Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, please call the Kern County Child Abuse Hotline.

Child Protective Services Hotline:

(661) 631-6011 (County)

(760) 375-6049 (Ridgecrest)

Substance abuse

College Community Services Adolescent Substance Use Disorder Treatment Team (12 to 17 years old)

760 499-7406, 1400 N. Norma Ste. 127-133

Ridgecrest Health Resources:

Pediatricians/Family practice

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Pediatrics

760 499-3846, Suite 301, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Immunizations

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Pediatrics

760 499-3846, Suite 301, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Urgent Care

Heather Stone Urgent Care

760 446-4571, 900 N Heritage Dr Ste E

Rural Health Clinic Urgent Care

760 499-3800, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Emergency Care

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies, 1081 N. China Lake Blvd.

Dentists

Bachman Family Dentistry

760 375-8512, 700 N. Sanders St. Ste B

Children's Dental Group

760 446-8688, 501 W Joyner Ave #B

Palm Tree Pediatric Dentistry

760 463-9006, 1101 N Norma St, Suite B

Rural Health Dental Clinic

760 499-3296, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Hearing

High Desert Audiology

760-375-9399, 121 S. China Lake Blvd Ste. B

Vision

VisionCare

760 446-5555, 1409 N Norma St.

Focus Optometry Center

760 375-9709, 905 Drummond Ave.

Walmart Vision Center

760 463-6058, 201 E Bowman Rd.

Orthopedics

Healthy Bone & Joint Center

760 446-8692, 1041 N. China Lake Blvd.

Valley Orthopedic Institute (in Ridgecrest on Thursdays)

661 949-8643, 1533 North Downs Street

Pharmacies

Center Pharmacy

760 446-4141, 1109 N. China Lake Blvd.

Rite Aid

760 375-0223, 101 North China Lake Blvd.

Sav-on at Albertsons

760 384-4020, 927 S China Lake Blvd.

Walgreens

760 384-2358, 101 Drummond Ave.

Physicals/Sports physicals

Omni Family Health (has sliding fee scale)

1-800-300-6664, 1133 N. Chelsea Street

Rural Health Pediatrics

760 499-3846, Suite 301, 1111 N. China Lake Blvd.

Sports Medicine/Chiropractic

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Chiropractic Clinic

760 371-1300, 840 N. Norma St., Suite B

Ledesma Chiropractic Sports Medicine

760 499-2367

Women's Health

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Women's Health Services

760 499-3640, 1011 N. China Lake Blvd., Suite A

Ridgecrest Pregnancy Care Center

760 384-2273, 341 Ridgecrest Blvd

Women's Center High Desert

760 371-1969, 134 China Lake Blvd