

Durham Unified School District

Welcome to the 2021/22 School year!

The Durham Unified School District looks forward to ensuring every student has the best school experience possible this year. We are excited to start the year in as normal a Durham fashion as possible. We look forward to seeing our parents and community volunteers back on campus.

The Durham Unified School District is preparing for the start of school. Our first day of school is August 18, 2021. We are planning to return to a normal school schedule on that day. As we prepare for the return of our students, I wanted to share a few items with you about the upcoming year.

First, we planned intensively to use this year addressing learning lost during the pandemic. We will be gathering data about learning loss, and implementing plans for helping students get back on track academically.

Second, our schools are prepared to support students who are struggling emotionally from the stresses related to COVID – 19.

You will also receive information from your student’s school about start dates, times and other specific information. The information will also be on the school website. Go to www.durhamunified.org

Let’s make this the great year all of our students deserve! More information about the upcoming year is below. Please read this entire message as some rules and laws have changed. Those changes may impact the options and rights of your student.

Sincerely,

John Bohannon

Superintendent

COVID considerations for Returning to School*:

Prevention Action	DUSD Implementation
Face Coverings	Everyone will be encouraged to follow CDPH mandates. No student will be excluded from in-person instruction for refusal to wear a mask.
Healthy Hygiene	Students and staff will receive frequent reminders
Food Service	Grab and Go offerings and outside seating for meals at least until Kitchen remodels are complete.
Physical Distancing	No longer required, but will be encouraged
Symptom Monitoring / Health Screening / Testing	Everyone will follow CDPH mandates

Quarantine/Isolation	Everyone will follow CDPH mandates
Cleaning/Disinfecting	Staff will follow CDPH mandates
Transportation	Everyone will be encouraged to follow CDPH mandates. No student will be excluded from in-person instruction for refusal to wear a mask.

** Please remember that the department of health could change the mandates at any time depending on the situation with COVID 19 cases. The latest mandate allows districts to determine how they enforce the rules; this may change as well.*

2021-22 School Year – Masks

The District’s position on current CDPH Covid Mandates is as follows:

Durham Unified School District will strongly encourage all students and staff to comply with CDC/CDPH guidance, including use of masks.

However, students will not be excluded from school for refusal to wear a mask. The District will direct all of its resources toward ensuring every student gets the best in-person instruction and social/emotional support possible.

We are committed to closing learning gaps due to the COVID disruption during the past school year. The District will continue to deploy COVID prevention measures and encourage everyone to continue to take public health precautions and follow CDC and CDPH guidelines. The CDC recommends layers of protection from the virus. At DUSD, those layers will include:

- Recently upgraded HVAC systems with hi-tech filters which help remove virus particles from the air.
- Encouraging outdoor instruction when possible, and keeping windows and doors open when possible.
- Supporting teachers and staff who request additional protective equipment
- Providing training for students and staff on COVID transmission prevention, and proper hygiene practice.
- Custodial practices utilizing compounds which reduce the likelihood of transmission from surfaces.
- Encouraging staff and students to remain home whenever they have possible COVID Symptoms.
- Following mandates on quarantining. If plastic shields are to be installed, they will not be installed in a way that singles out individual students.

Additionally, the district remains committed to advocating for local control on issues of this nature.

Assembly Bill 130 - Independent Study

This bill requires school districts to offer independent study for the 2021-2022 school year. DUSD has applied to the Butte County Office of Education to get this requirement waiver due to budget constraints and lack of demand for this type of program in DUSD.

Assembly Bill (AB) 104

The state of California recently enacted a new law – Assembly Bill (AB) 104 – that will expand learning and credit recovery options for students who may have struggled academically during the pandemic-impacted 2020-2021 school year.

For the DUSD these include:

- A process for students who were enrolled for the 2020-2021 year to request to repeat the last grade
- A process for high school students to change eligible grades to Pass/No Pass • Exemption from district graduation requirements for students in grades 11 or 12 who are not on track to graduate (students must meet state graduation requirements which are not as robust as district requirements).

Process for Students to Request to Repeat the 2020-21 Grade

This law provides a process for parents and guardians to request that their student repeat the grade they were enrolled in during the 2020-2021 school year. Parents and guardians of students who were enrolled during the last school year would be eligible to make this request if their student received a D, F, or No Pass grade for at least one-half of their coursework in the 2020-2021 school year. This request would trigger a personalized consultation with a representative of the district to review and discuss all learning recovery options and supports that the student could access.

How to apply: Parents/Guardians may submit a written request by emailing the Director of Student and Support Services (mbertolucci@durhamunified.org), or calling (530) 895-4675. The district will schedule a consultation within 30 days of receiving the email.

Process for High School Students to Change Grades to Pass/No Pass

AB 104 also provides a process for high school students to request that a letter grade they received in the 2020-2021 school year be changed to a Pass/No Pass grade.

How to apply: Parents/Guardians must complete the California Department of Education (CDE) [Application](#). A list of postsecondary educational institutions that will accept a Pass/No Pass grade, instead of a letter grade has been posted on the [Durham High School website](#). Families will have until August 25, 2021, to make the request. After this time, requests will no longer be considered. If you have any questions, please email the Director of Student Services and Support (mbertolucci@durhamunified.org) or call (530) 895-4675. The form may be emailed to the Director of Student Services and Support or dropped off at the District Office on or before August 25, 2021.

Exemption for the 2020-21 Juniors and Seniors of District Graduation Requirements

Finally, the law requires that high school students who were in their third or fourth year of high school during the 2020-2021 school year, and who were not on track to graduate in four years, may be exempt from our district's graduation requirements that exceed statewide requirements. It also requires high schools to provide credit recovery support for these students, including the option to retake courses, or to enroll in a fifth year of high school, to complete state graduation requirements.

How to apply: DUSD will contact students eligible for this exemption. You do not need to contact the district or the school sites.

Quarantine Requirements

1. Quarantine recommendations for vaccinated close contacts
 - a. For those who are vaccinated, follow the [CDPH Fully Vaccinated People Guidance](#) regarding quarantine.
2. Quarantine recommendations for unvaccinated students for exposures when both parties were wearing a mask, as required in K-12 indoor settings. These are adapted from the CDC K-12 guidance and CDC definition of a close contact.
 - a. When both parties were wearing a mask in any school setting in which students are supervised by school staff (including indoor or outdoor school settings and school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems), unvaccinated students who are close contacts (more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 0-6 feet indoors) may undergo a modified quarantine as follows. They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:
 - i. Are asymptomatic;
 - ii. Continue to appropriately mask, as required;
 - iii. Undergo at least twice weekly testing during the 10-day quarantine; and
 - iv. Continue to quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting.
3. Quarantine recommendations for: unvaccinated [close contacts](#) who were not wearing masks or for whom the infected individual was not wearing a mask during the indoor exposure.
 - a. For these contacts, those who remain asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue self-quarantine under the following conditions:
 - i. Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR
 - ii. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.
 - b. To discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close contacts must:
 - i. Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND
 - ii. Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wearing a mask when around others, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure.
 - c. If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care.
4. Isolation recommendations
 - a. For both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons, follow the [CDPH Isolation Guidance](#) for those diagnosed with COVID-19.

Note: Fully vaccinated students exposed to COVID-19 may refrain from quarantine following a known exposure if asymptomatic, per [CDPH Fully vaccinated People Recommendations](#).

QUARANTINE FAQs

6. Why does the guidance permit students with known exposures to COVID-19 to remain in-school?

Scientific research and experience from around the country demonstrate that when both parties are wearing facemasks appropriately at the time of a school-based exposure to COVID-19, in-school transmission is unlikely and students can safely continue in-person learning. When students remain in school after exposure because the student and the individual with COVID-19 were wearing masks appropriately, this is called modified quarantine. Modified quarantine involves a period of time during which students may continue in-person instruction but should refrain from all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting. Testing during modified quarantine provides an additional layer of safety and monitoring. Modified quarantine allows for less missed days of school and supports in-person education.

7. Who qualifies for modified quarantine?

Asymptomatic unvaccinated students exposed to COVID-19 may qualify for a modified quarantine, provided they meet criteria listed in the [K-12 Guidance](#).

The infected person to whom the asymptomatic unvaccinated student was exposed may be any individual in the school setting, including fellow students, teachers, or other school-based contacts. The exposure may have occurred in any school setting in which students are supervised by school staff. This includes indoor or outdoor school settings and school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems.

Note: Fully vaccinated students exposed to COVID-19 may refrain from quarantine following a known exposure if asymptomatic, per [CDPH Fully vaccinated People](#)

Recommendations.

8. **What are students permitted to do during modified quarantine?**

When students are attending school during modified quarantine, they continue to be required to wear masks indoors and are strongly encouraged to wear masks outdoors. They may use school buses, including buses operated by public and private school systems. They may participate in all required instructional components of the school day, except activities where a mask cannot be worn, such as while playing certain musical instruments. However, students on modified quarantine may eat meals on campus using food service recommendations provided in the [K-12 Guidance](#). As noted above, they should refrain from all extracurricular activities, including sports.

9. **What should be the timing for twice weekly testing of students undergoing a modified quarantine? When can students on modified quarantine resume all activities?**

In general, it is recommended to test immediately after being exposed to someone with COVID-19. Subsequent testing should occur at least 3 days apart. As per Item 9 in the [K-12 Guidance](#), quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.

10. **What type of test may be used to assess a person's status during quarantine or to exit quarantine?**

If a person is asymptomatic during quarantine, any FDA-approved diagnostic test is acceptable for evaluation of an individual's COVID-19 status, as noted in the [CDPH testing guidance](#). This includes antigen diagnostic tests and PCR diagnostic tests. PCR tests are preferred, but not required. For more information about test types, see the [CDPH school testing resources](#).

Collection of diagnostic specimens for asymptomatic persons during quarantine may occur in schools, healthcare settings, or other locations supervised by school or healthcare personnel. Specimens may be processed at the point-of-care (POC) or in a

laboratory.

At this time, at-home testing is not recommended for evaluation of an individual's status during quarantine. CDPH is currently conducting pilot studies to further understand the utility of at-home testing.

For persons in quarantine who experience [symptoms](#), a negative result from an antigen test or POC molecular test results should be confirmed with a laboratory-based PCR test.