



COVID UPDATE 2022-02-24

Dear Harmony Families,

Thank you to all who attended the video update on February 22nd. This letter is intended to briefly summarize the content from that presentation. The full video has been uploaded to our YouTube channel and is available at the following link: <https://youtu.be/StsNfYnBr2s>

So, here we are. Two years into a pandemic that has seen dramatic impacts on the structure of our lives. Though we have perhaps been through the worst of it, COVID is not yet done with us, (though I'm sure all of us are done with it). As Harmony looks forward into the changing landscape of COVID, we see many factors that should reassure us that our ability to manage the risks associated with COVID have greatly improved.

Foremost is the availability and wide adoption of highly effective COVID vaccines. 80% of all Sonoma County residents are fully vaccinated and another 7% are on their way. At Harmony, our student population is now 60+% vaccinated, and our faculty/staff is 98%. Recent CDC data demonstrates that people who are fully vaccinated (boosted) are 41 times LESS likely to die from COVID, and 3.2 times LESS likely to test positive and 50% less likely to have long covid than people who are not vaccinated. Further, people who rely on prior COVID infection to protect them do not have the same level of immune protection that is generated from mRNA vaccination.

In addition, new anti-viral therapeutics that have shown great success to reduce severe outcomes for hospitalized COVID patients are increasing in availability. These new therapies further reduce the risk for adverse impacts from COVID infections. Finally, our own mitigation strategies have proven successful at limiting case spread in our community. Though Harmony has had 40 positive cases on site since the pandemic began, we have not had an outbreak related to any of these individual cases.

Thus, even with current case rates higher than we experienced earlier in the pandemic, the overall risk of adverse COVID impact on our community has been reduced. This is important to remember as our strategies in managing COVID risk adapt to a more "endemic" trend, punctuated by momentary epidemic surges due to evolved variants.

Mitigations Should Match Risk

All of us adjust our behaviors according to increasing or decreasing risks. We wear bicycle helmets when riding a bike, add lights and reflective vests when on busy roads, or choose not to ride our bikes at all on roads that are too dangerous for bicyclists. So too, we adjust our mitigation strategies in response to the risk posed by COVID in different scenarios. When COVID case spread is high, hospitalization is high, or the particular variant is exceedingly dangerous, our mitigations should increase to reduce the risk presented to our children and community. When case spread is low, hospitalization is low, or the variant is less likely to cause adverse infections, our mitigations can relax in response to the overall lower risk present. Therefore, Harmony is in the process of developing a system of tiered mitigation protocols that will increase or decrease protections depending on the underlying COVID risks present.



The proposed multi-tiered system has 4 tiers based roughly on the CDC's own tier system: Low, Moderate, Substantial and High. Each "risk" tier has its own set of mitigation strategies meant to collectively manage the risk present at each level. The specific conditions that define the threshold for each tier are awaiting review from the local public health department as well as confirmation on standards from the CDPH (expected early next week).

Attached to this letter is the DRAFT of the mitigation protocol document for Spring 2022. Please note that this document has NOT been adopted yet. It is being shared for early review to develop community awareness and understanding of the future tiered system that will help guide reductions or increases in mitigation protections relative to the COVID epidemic/endemic situation.

Initial Changes

What is important to note is that though this document has not yet been adopted in whole, One shift in mitigation protocol has been formally adopted by the Board on February 17th. Outdoor masking will be required when case rates are above 50 cases per 100k residents, but when the case rate drops below 50/100k and can sustain that reduced level for more than 7 days, outdoor masking will become optional. This means that students and staff will have the option of not wearing a mask when outdoors when the case rate is under 50/100i. Some may continue to mask and this is a supported practice for both students and staff.

One consequence of this action, however, is that students within a class who are NOT vaccinated but who choose to go unmasked outdoors, will now be considered a EXPOSED close contact if another student in their recess group tests positive. In this case, unmasked, unvaccinated students who were close contacts will be required to quarantine at home. Unmasked vaccinated students will be allowed to conduct a modified quarantine (still attend school, but quarantine from extra-curricular activities). It is strongly encouraged that families who have not vaccinated their child consider vaccination or continued outdoor masking to reduce the risk of a required home quarantine if there is a positive case in their class.

Given that we dropped below 50/100k cases last week, we will be shifting mitigation tiers into tier 3 starting February 28th. **This means that masking will be optional outdoors starting Monday, February 28th.** If the case rate increases above 50/100k, we will restart outdoor mask protections until the COVID risk level decreases again.

If you have questions, please review the video presentation linked at the top of this letter, or contact me directly, mmorgan@harmonyusd.org. As always, thank you for working together to keep Harmony safe and open for learning.

Sincerely,

Matthew Morgan
Superintendent - Principal

COVID Safety Protocols Spring 2022 (Draft)

Activity, Behavior, Mitigation		COVID Conditions Risk Tiers			
		ENDEMIC (Consistent Spread)		EPIDEMIC (Surge)	
		Low	Moderate	Substantial	High
		TBD Case Rate < 5 /100k <small>*If Student Vax Rate >85%, USE CDC CR <10/100k</small>	TBD Case Rate 6-10/100k <small>*If Student Vax Rate >85%, USE CDC CR 10 - 50/100k</small>	TBD Case Rate 10-50/100k <small>*If Student Vax Rate >85%, USE CDC CR 50-100/100k</small>	TBD Case Rate >50 /100k <small>*If Student Vax Rate >85%, USE CDC CR >100 /100k</small>
Indoor Masking (Pending CDPH)	Required	Optional	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Note	If positive case found in class group, masks required for 2 weeks following (incubation period)	KN95/94 Recommended	KN95/94 Recommended	KN95/KN94 Recommended
Outdoor Masking	Required	Optional	Optional	Optional	Yes
	Note				KN95/94 Recommended
Testing Students & Staff	Surveillance	No	Yes - Every 2 weeks (DOF)	Yes - Weekly (DOF)	Yes - Twice Weekly (DOF)
	Quarantine	Neg Rapid @ 5d / 10d w/o	Neg Rapid @ 5d / 10d w/o	Neg Rapid @ 5d / 10d w/o	Neg Rapid @ 5d / 10d w/o
Social Distancing	Classroom	No	No	No	No
	Outdoor Dining	No	No	Yes > 6 ft	Yes > 6 ft
	Indoor Dining	No	Yes > 6 ft	Yes > 6 ft	Yes > 12 ft
	Playground	No	No	No	No
Volunteer with Students	Vaccination Required	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Rapid Testing	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc
Volunteers no Students	Vaccination Required	No	No	No	Yes
	Rapid Testing	No	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc
Field Trips	Permitted	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, Local only
	Student/Staff Vehicle	Private Vehicles or Bus	Bus Only	Bus Only	Bus Only
	Volunteer Vehicle	Private Vehicles or Bus	Private Vehicle Only	Private Vehicle Only	Private Vehicle Only
Overnight Field Trips	Permitted	Yes	Yes	No	No
	Vaccination Required	No (21/22)	Yes	No	No
	Rapid Testing	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc
Events, Gatherings & Assemblies	Students & Staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <100
	Families	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Inter-school	Yes	Yes	No	No
Performances	Participant Masking	No	No	No	Yes
	Audience Masking	No	No	Yes	Yes
League Athletics	K-8	Yes	Yes	Yes Indoor sports w/masks	Yes Indoor sports w/masks
	High School	Yes	Yes	Yes Indoor sports w/masks	Yes Indoor sports w/masks
	Specators	Yes	Yes Indoor sports w/masks	Yes Indoor sports w/masks	Yes Indoor sports w/masks
	Participant Game Testing	No	No	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc	Yes Neg Rapid 24hrs +Doc
Hand Washing		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Drop Off/Pick-up		Standard	Standard	Modified	Modified
Vaccination Required (2021-2022)	Staff	Yes or Test 2x Weekly	Yes or Test 2x Weekly	Yes or Test 2x Weekly	Yes or Test 2x Weekly
	12+ Students	No	No	No	No
	5-11 Students	No	No	No	No
Campus Accessibility	Buildings - Business	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
	Buildings - Casual	> 4 PM	> 4PM	> 4PM	> 4PM or Health Order
	Play/Field/Trail	> 3:15PM	> 3:15PM	> 3:15PM	> 3:15 PM or Health Order
	Garden	> 4 PM	> 4PM	> 4PM	> 4PM or Health Order
Board Meetings, Committees, Parent Conferences	Small Group 2-10	Yes	Yes	Yes (Zoom Offered)	Yes (Zoom Preferred)
	Medium Group 11-50	Yes	Yes	Yes (Zoom Offered)	No (Zoom Offered or Out)
	Large Group 50+	Yes	Yes	No (Zoom Offered)	No (Zoom Offered)
Dining	Outdoors	Yes	Yes	Yes SD > 6 ft	Yes SD > 6 ft
	Indoors	Yes	Yes SD > 6 ft	Yes SD > 6 ft	Yes SD > 12 ft
	Dishes	Yes	No	No	No
	Home Goods	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Ventilation/Filtration	Non-Smoke Day	Standard CO2 < 800	Standard CO2 < 700	Standard CO2 < 700	Standard CO2 < 700
	Smoke >150	Windows Closed If CO2 < 1000	Windows Closed If CO2 < 800	Windows Closed If CO2 < 800	Windows Open
Music & Choir	Outdoors	Yes	Yes	Yes with masks/covers	Yes with masks/covers
	Indoors	Yes	Yes with masks/covers	Yes with masks/covers	No
Bussing	Masks	No	No	Yes	Yes
	Social Distancing	No	No	Yes	Yes