

Additional FAQs - Updated 7/24/20

Family Commitment Form

- **Q: The Governor is mandating virtual only learning for all schools located within counties on the state monitoring list for rising coronavirus cases (which includes San Diego). What will happen for PUSD?**

A: Poway Unified will follow all State [directives](#) and local public health guidelines for school reopening. Poway Unified is closely monitoring our county metrics to see if cases are reduced, and we are committed to physically reopening our schools for our students when health conditions permit us to do so. If county cases keep increasing leading up September 2, we will reopen initially with online learning for both on campus and virtual learning academy students, until San Diego County meets the Governor's requirements for on campus learning.

- **Q: Why do we still have to commit to a choice if all schools have to start the school year online?**

A: We recognize our students have experienced many challenges since we had to close schools in March. In order to ensure continuity of learning and maintain connections with their classmates and their teacher, both on campus and virtual learning academy students will begin the school year placed in their chosen learning option.

Based on this week's survey, with 91% of our families responding, we have 60% who want to return on campus, 36% who want virtual learning, and 3% who want an alternative such as homeschool or independent study.

Based on the number of families choosing each option, site leaders and staff need adequate time to adjust their staffing appropriately, plan for instructional programs and course assignments, create their master schedules, as well as adjust classroom configurations and staggered start times, passing periods/recess/lunch times, etc. This is a highly complex and complicated process, one we do not take lightly. We want to ensure our plans can be rolled out as smoothly as possible, while ensuring everyone's safety.

- **Q: Will the start of the school year be delayed?**

*A: Yes, PUSD will be delaying the start of the school year until **Wednesday, September 2**, based on the reasons outlined in Dr. Phelps' 07-24-20 email. (Abraxas High school opened its Transition program on campus as scheduled on July 16, but due to the State direction, both the Transition and diploma programs moved to virtual learning on July 20. Valley Elementary school will begin on August 3, their regularly scheduled start date, with a fully virtual learning option, with the goal of offering in person learning, when health conditions permit.)*

- **Q: If San Diego County does not meet the requirements to come off the monitoring list, will PUSD apply for a waiver to open its elementary schools?**

A: The state's latest directive includes a provision that reads: "A waiver of these criteria may be granted by the local health officer for elementary schools to open for in-person instruction. A waiver may only be granted if one is requested by the superintendent (or equivalent for charter or private schools), in consultation with labor, parent and community organizations. Local health officers must review local community epidemiological data, consider other public health interventions, and consult with (the California Department of Public Health) when considering a waiver request." PUSD is exploring this option and has asked the San Diego County Office of Education for clarification from the public health department regarding how school districts would apply for a waiver and what requirements would need to be met.

- **Q: Is a PUSD homeschool or New Directions independent study option still an option and still available?**

A: Yes, please see the information under the "TK-8 Homeschool" heading and the "6-12 New Directions" heading below.

- **Q: If a family does not commit to a choice, will a choice be made for me?**

A: If a family does not commit to a choice via the District commitment form, the school site will follow up with a communication. If a family still does not respond, the students will be automatically placed in the on campus learning model.

- **Q: If none of the options work for me and I unenroll from PUSD (i.e. go out of district to a private or charter school), but I change my mind mid-year and want to come back to my PUSD school, is there a spot for me?**

A: If you unenroll from the Poway Unified School District, we cannot guarantee a space for your child at your school mid year. Any re-enrollment would be subject to space availability and class size limitations, and as such, you may not be placed at your neighborhood school or school of choice.

Virtual Learning Academy

- **Q: If I select the VLA option, will my child still be associated with their school and have a teacher from their school?**

A: Our goal is to foster continuity of our school community. This means to the greatest extent possible, students will receive virtual instruction from a teacher at their home school. The determining factors will be the number of students and staff requesting the VLA option for each school. If placement at the home school is not feasible, the student will receive VLA instruction from another highly qualified Poway Unified teacher. Additionally, students may participate in

on-campus extracurricular activities at their school, such as athletics, before/after school clubs, special events if and when they are offered.

- **Q: How will Virtual Learning Academy teachers be selected? Is it just the teachers who have to stay home because of health concerns?**

A: While teachers who need medical accommodations will be given first priority, PUSD is also surveying teachers for interest. Selection will be based on experience in the virtual classroom, subject expertise, strong Canvas background and usage, understanding of digital citizenship, collaboration, etc. All teachers will receive professional learning before the start of, or at the beginning of the school year as well as ongoing professional learning throughout the year.

- **Q: What is the expected level of parent engagement needed for VLA students?**

A: This varies depending on grade level. Elementary students will need some supervision throughout the day as they transition between instruction and assignments, and the amount of time spent online is developmentally appropriate. Please view elementary the sample schedule [here](#). Parents will need to ensure students stay on task and help them adhere to the schedule and complete assignments, however the instruction is provided by the assigned VLA classroom teacher. Secondary students are much more independent and will have more live instruction time and screen time throughout their day. You can view the middle school sample schedule [here](#) and the high school sample schedule [here](#).

- **Q: Will advanced classes such as honors and AP be offered in the VLA. Will there be separate GATE classes?**

A: Classes such as honors English, advanced math, or advanced placement (A.P.) classes will be offered in the VLA. However, there will not be separate homogeneous GATE classes. GATE students will be placed throughout heterogeneous VLA classes and differentiated instruction will be provided.

- **Q: Is the VLA curriculum different from on campus curriculum. Are the teachers coming up with it from scratch?**

A: No, the curriculum is based on the same standards and will mirror the same pace as in person learning. It is just the method of delivery and assignments that may need to be adjusted for VLA.

- **Q: Can VLA students participate in school athletics and after school activities?**

A: Yes, sports will be open to both in-person and VLA students, provided that they are allowed under public health orders. Currently organized youth sports are not permitted by the public health order and CIF has delayed the start of high school sports until December 2020 or January 2021.

- **Q: Can VLA students get meals from their schools?**

A: Yes, virtual learning students can pick up their meals in the cafeteria at any school site during scheduled lunch periods. Additionally, the following ten school sites will provide grab-and-go breakfast and lunch:

- Del Norte High School
- Los Penasquitos Elementary School
- Meadowbrook Middle School
- Midland Elementary School
- Mt. Carmel High School
- Pomerado Elementary School
- Poway High School
- Rancho Bernardo High School
- Valley Elementary School
- Westview High School

- **Q: How will VLA students participate in electives like performing arts?**

A: We are working directly with our teachers to plan electives such as performing arts and career technical education classes. There may be hybrid, virtual, or in-person options. We expect to provide more details in the future.

- **Q: Will there be materials provided such as for science labs or art classes?**

A: Yes, VLA will have materials provided through distributions/pick up opportunities.

- **Q: Will there be one learning platform (one stop shop for communication and assignments) for VLA?**

A: Yes, all Virtual Learning Academy teachers will use Canvas as the main learning platform for assignments and communication with students. Some online web conferencing platforms such as Zoom or Google Meet will be utilized for direct teaching and learning. PUSD will also be offering adaptive learning curriculum, depending on grade level, via Lexia and iReady. PUSD is planning professional development for all teachers to ensure they are trained on online platforms.

- **Q: Will VLA students be able to contact and interact with their classmates?**

A: Yes, as age appropriate, students will be encouraged to do group projects, discussions, and collaborate together with their VLA classmates.

- **Q: Will students with IEPs receive monitoring and support if they choose the VLA option**

A: Yes, students with IEPs will continue to be supported. Our Special Education department is collaborating on a supplemental reopening guidebook for families.

- **Q: Will Virtual Learning Academy classes appear different on the student's transcript.**

A: No, the classes will appear as they normally do on their school transcript, and VLA high school seniors will graduate with their on campus classmates.

On Campus Learning

- **Q: Is the preschool program following similar guidance to the TK-12 program? What are the options for preschool?**

A: PUSD's preschool department offers different types of preschool programs. Preschool's goal is to return all classrooms to on campus only, as soon as they are able to be open based on their particular guidelines, due to the students' developmental needs at this young age. Currently the information for re-opening is:

- *Full day 7:00 am – 5:45 pm and the two Expanded day programs (at WGES and D-39C) **will be able to open on campus on the first day of school.** That is because they fall under the guidance of the [California Department of Public Health Child Care Program guidelines](#), and programs that include child care components can remain open.*
- *The California State Funded preschool programs fall under a specific contract with the California Department of Education. They are guided by district guidelines for most operating decisions and thus will open virtually and return to campus as soon as other PUSD students return to campus.*
- *The Parent Participation part day preschools operate as a preschool only program and do not allow us to consider opening them as childcare programs. Therefore, they will open virtually and then return to campus as soon as other PUSD students return to campus. . We will be charging a reduced rate for these families, and that rate would guarantee the families a place in the classroom once we open as well as a temporary virtual learning experience.*

Parents already registered for these programs will receive a personalized program specific email the week of July 27th. At that time, it will also be posted on the preschool website [here](#).

- **Q: Will Extended Student Services (ESS) be operating and available this Fall?**

A: Yes, ESS will be available before and after school.

- **Q: When will I be able to view the site specific plan for reopening from my school?**

A: All school site principals are currently working on their site specific plans (Reopening Plan for Learning, Health and Safety) and will make them available for review, as well as host a question and answer session, before or during the family commitment period.

- **Q: Will playgrounds be open during recess and lunch time?**

A: Yes, playgrounds will be open for use. These break times will be staggered to reduce the number of students at a time. The equipment will also be disinfected between use. Please see this [short video](#) to see how this is being done currently for ESS with a diluted bleach solution.

- **Q: Will secondary students still move from class to class?**

A: These logistical details will be part of the secondary site specific plans, which may include staggered passing periods or some opportunities where the teacher rotates, instead of the students; or directional pathways to reduce student interaction.

- **Q: How will we ensure proper social distancing in a classroom if class sizes are not reduced?**

A: Based on the number of families choosing the virtual learning academy or other alternatives, class sizes may be smaller. If there are a large number of families choosing on campus learning, schools may also need to create smaller cohorts or pods within grades or classes to minimize contact with other students. For example, schools are working on contingency plans to reduce class sizes by staggering on campus learning time and reducing the number of students on campus by splitting classes and having an AM session and a PM session.

Additionally, schools may rearrange furniture and utilize additional spaces, both indoor and outdoor, to spread out students whenever and wherever possible. The District is purchasing privacy shields to place in between student desks. Teacher and other staff desks will be distanced at least six feet away from student desks when practicable.

PUSD has encouraged staff to think creatively as we continue to work to further reduce class sizes to increase physical distancing on campus, while carefully weighing staff availability. For example, for high school students choosing on campus learning, we are looking into expanding and leveraging some of our online courses such as civics, health, economics, chemistry, math 2A-2B, U.S. and world history. This would allow for a high school student to potentially take some of their class periods on campus and some online. Students choosing the online course offerings would reduce their daily physical presence on campus.

Q: Can you explain that a little further?

A: Here is a potential sample first trimester schedule for an on-campus high school student:

1st Period: Health (online from home)

2nd Period: Math 2A (online from home)

3rd Period: English 1A (on campus)

4th Period: Spanish 2 (on campus)

5th Period: Photography 1 (on campus)

As you can see, the student is not physically on campus for the first two periods of the day because they have chosen to take advantage of some online course offerings through PUSD. These courses would be available to PUSD high school students regardless of school enrollment, taught by PUSD teachers using PUSD curriculum. This option has always existed for a limited number of students in the past, but the District is expanding these offerings to create additional options for students and their families.

- **Q: Will athletics/sports be allowed?**

A: While small group, non contact practices are currently allowed, competitive youth sports are not yet permitted under public health orders. However, as soon as they are, PUSD will follow public health guidelines as well as CIF (California Interscholastic Federation) guidelines. CIF has announced that education-based athletics for the 2020-2021 school year will begin with a modified season in December 2020 or January 2021. You can view the announcement and modified schedule [here](#). Again, once athletics are permitted, both in person learning and virtual learning academy students can participate in athletics.

- **Q: Will temperature checks and masks be required for the bus?**

A: Yes, all students will be required to wear masks on the bus, due to the fact that physical distancing will not be possible. Students will have their temperature checked before boarding.

- **Q: Will students have training on safety measures regarding COVID-19?**

A: Yes, we will be incorporating health and safety training into our curriculum throughout the school year. In the meantime, here is a helpful [introductory video](#) you can show your children. Additionally, parents should familiarize children with [how to wear cloth face coverings](#) and [how to properly wash their hands](#).

- **Q: Will students be required to wear masks?**

A: Yes, the California Department of Public Health Guidelines were updated to require all students in 3rd grade and above to wear masks at school, unless exempt. Students in 2nd grade and below are strongly encouraged to wear masks at school.

- **Q: Who is exempt from wearing masks?**

A: Persons under 2 years old, and persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering are exempted by the CDPH.

- **Q: Will staff need to wear masks?**

A: Yes, PUSD will provide staff with face coverings, and all staff will be required to wear them, unless exempted.

- **Q: Will staff be regularly tested?**

A: School staff are essential workers, and staff includes teachers, paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, janitors, bus drivers, or any other school employee that may have contact with students or other staff. School districts and schools should test staff periodically, as testing capacity permits and as practicable. Examples of recommended frequency include testing all staff over 2 months, where 25% of staff are tested every 2 weeks, or 50% every month to rotate testing of all staff over time.

- **Q: What if a school or school district reopens to in-person instruction, but the county is later placed on the county monitoring list?**

A: Per the CDPH, schools should begin testing staff, or increase frequency of staff testing but are not required to close. Guidelines for school closures are listed below, under the CDPH guidelines.

- **Q: What measures should be taken when a student, teacher or staff member has symptoms, is a contact of someone infected, or is diagnosed with COVID-19?**

A: We will follow the CDPH guidelines below:

	Student or Staff with:	Action	Communication
1.	COVID-19 Symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, loss of taste or smell, difficulty breathing) Symptom Screening: Per CA School Sector Specific Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send home • Recommend testing (If positive, see #3, if negative, see #4) • School/classroom remain open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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/classroom remain open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 & 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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/classroom remain open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider school community notification if prior awareness of testing

(†) A contact is defined as a person who is <6 feet from a case for >15 minutes. 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.

- **Q: What are the criteria for closing a school?**

A: Individual school closure is recommended based on the number of cases, the percentage of the teacher/students/staff that are positive for COVID-19, and following consultation with the Local Health Officer. Individual school closure may be appropriate when there are multiple cases in multiple cohorts at a school or when at least 5 percent of the total number of teachers/student/staff are cases within a 14-day period, depending on the size and physical layout of the school. The Local Health Officer may also determine school closure is warranted for

other reasons, including results from public health investigation or other local epidemiological data.

- **Q: If a school is closed for in-person learning, when may it reopen?**

A: Schools may typically reopen after 14 days and the following have occurred:

- Cleaning and disinfection
- Public health investigation
- Consultation with the local public health department

- **Q: What are the criteria for closing a school district?**

A: A superintendent should close a school district if 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days, and in consultation with the local public health department.

- **Q: If a school district closes, when may it reopen?**

A: Districts may typically reopen after 14 days, in consultation with the local public health department.

- **Q: What happens to student learning in the event of a classroom, school, or district closure?**

A: If a classroom cohort or school needs to close, the students move to online learning with their existing teacher until they can return back to campus. While the daily online learning schedule might look similar to that of students in the Virtual Learning Academy, the students are not joining the Virtual Learning Academy.

- **Q: What happens if my child becomes ill or needs to quarantine due to COVID-19?**

If an individual student needs to quarantine (but asymptomatic), students will be provided with online learning and adaptive curriculum opportunities. This allows the student to work at home.

If students are ill, absences accumulated due to COVID-19 will not count toward the student's absence total.

TK-8 Homeschool Learning Option

- **Q: How is homeschool different from the Virtual Learning Academy?**

A: In the PUSD Homeschool program, the parent is provided with appropriate curriculum and materials and is the one doing the direct instruction. The parent and student determine their schedule, as long as they are meeting the minimum instruction time per week. They are also required to meet weekly with an assigned teacher to review assigned work. In VLA, a student is part of a virtual classroom with an assigned teacher, who follows a set schedule and provides daily instruction and interaction and provides ongoing feedback.

- **Q: I'm interested in the PUSD homeschool option. Will everyone who wants to homeschool get in?**

A: Yes, PUSD is shifting our teaching staff to support homeschool families based on the number of families who indicate that this is their choice in the commitment form. Once we have that data, we can adjust staffing. All families wanting to choose the homeschool option will be accommodated.

- **Q: Is homeschool curriculum different from PUSD curriculum?**

A: No, it is the same curriculum we use in our schools.

- **Q: If I homeschool through PUSD, do I keep my "spot" at my school?**

A: Yes, you are still technically enrolled in your school, and you will be able to return back to your school in the 2021-22 school year.

- **Q: If I start the school year homeschooling through PUSD, can I switch back into in-person, on-campus learning at my school midyear?**

A: Yes, pending space and availability in your grade and in individual classrooms, based on class size maximums.

6-12 New Directions Option

- **Q: What is New Directions?**

A: The District's independent study program, New Directions, is available to students in grades 6-12. In this model, students take one or two courses at a time and meet weekly with their teacher to review prior assignments and receive lessons for the upcoming week. New Directions has an onsite Learning Center, located at Twin Peaks Center, where students can receive specialized support for their classes. Although most of the New Directions curriculum is independent, there are some face-to-face classes and labs, particularly in the subjects of math and science.

- **Q: If I sign up for New Directions, do I keep my "spot" at my school?**

A: Yes, you are still enrolled in your school.

- **Q: Are all the courses at my middle school or high school available to take through New Directions?**

A: No, the course selection is limited to mostly core classes, and does not include access to Advanced Placement (A.P.), World Languages, some Sciences, Performing Arts, and P.E.

- **Q: If I start the school year in New Directions through PUSD, can I switch back into in-person, on-campus learning at my school midyear?**

A: Yes, pending space and availability in your grade and in individual classrooms, based on class size maximums.

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Revised FAQs (first posted July 2, 2020 and now updated with new information)

Frequently Asked Questions: HEALTH AND SAFETY

What measures will be implemented on campus to ensure the safety of staff and students? Please see the PUSD Guidebook for a more thorough description.

Cleaning and Disinfecting: PUSD will take essential actions to create a physical environment that promotes student and staff safety through established protocols and procedures. These will include daily disinfection of areas used by students and staff, electrostatic cleaners used daily, focus on high-touch surfaces such as door handles and restrooms during the day.

Temperature Checks: At this time, temperature checks are required and will be administered at specific entry points for all students and staff. If a student or staff member has a temperature of 100 degrees or more, they will not be allowed onto the campus. If someone exhibits symptoms during the day, we will establish separate areas for them to wait to be picked up.

Physical Distancing: We will encourage physical distancing throughout the day as possible. Schedules will be developed to reduce numbers of students in common areas during breaks, lunches, and reduce large gatherings as feasible. Classrooms will utilize space by spreading desks and tables around the room, as well as using vacant classrooms and outdoor spaces, as available. Based on the number of families choosing the on campus option, schools are also creating contingency plans for additional physical distancing measures, such as staggered start times and AM/PM groups if necessary.

Please note: For most of our school buses physical distancing will not be possible. Students will be required to wear a face covering (unless specifically exempt by the CDPH guidelines). Students will also be subject to health screenings when boarding. Anyone exhibiting symptoms or fever will not be allowed to board the bus.

Face Coverings: At this time, the California Department of Public Health and San Diego County orders indicate all staff wear face coverings, masks, or face shields. We will provide masks to staff. We are requiring staff to wear face coverings for the increased safety and protection of themselves and others. Students 3rd grade and above are also required to wear face coverings, while students in 2nd grade and below are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings.

Hygiene: Hygiene practices will be reviewed regularly with students. We will teach and reinforce washing hands, avoiding contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth, and

covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff. We are adding hand sanitizer stations to high traffic areas on all campuses.

PUSD will continue to follow the California Department of Public Health guidelines and continue to collaborate with the San Diego County Public Health Agency for current guidelines on health measures.

How do schools expect to screen every child at least once per day?

Each school site will create a process for screening students in the most efficient way possible. This may mean sites have multiple entry locations to take temperatures. Parents will also be asked to assist us by pre-screening at home. This process has already been underway at our ESS summer camps, and staff are reporting the temperature-taking and screening process is less than 15 seconds per student.

What will happen if a student or staff member develops a fever or symptoms while on campus?

STAFF: If at any time during the school day a staff member develops a fever on campus, the staff member will be sent home.

STUDENT:

A child who is ill and exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19 will be given a mask to wear if they are not already wearing one and supervised in a separate area until parents arrive to pick them up.

Will they be required to be tested for COVID-19?

Schools will be testing staff periodically as lab capacity allows. Schools cannot require students get testing, only recommend it. Please review the chart provided by the CDPH, which describes what measures should be taken [here](#) on page 3.

Will parents, students and staff be made aware if someone on campus tests positive for COVID-19?

Yes, the California Department of Public Health guidance states that schools should document/track incidents of possible exposure and notify local health officials, staff and families immediately of any positive case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality, as required under FERPA and state law related to privacy of educational records.

What happens if a staff member or student tests positive? Will school be closed for 14 days? Is there a procedure in place for quarantining in the event that a person on campus tests positive or in the case that a family member of a student or staff personnel tests positive?

We will work with public health on whether a decision needs to be made to close school. We will review context, contacts and exposure to others to inform necessary next steps. When a student, teacher or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and has exposed others at the school, we will implement the following steps:

- In consultation with the local public health department, the appropriate school official may decide whether school closure is warranted, including the length of time necessary, based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.
- Given standard guidance for isolation at home for at least 14 days after close contact, the classroom or office where the patient was based will typically need to close temporarily as students or staff isolate.
- Additional close contacts at school outside of a classroom should also isolate at home.
- Additional areas of the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual may also need to be closed temporarily for cleaning and disinfection.
- Implement communication plans for school closure to include outreach to students, parents, teachers, staff and the community.
- Provide guidance to parents, teachers and staff reminding them of the importance of community physical distancing measures while a school is closed, including discouraging students or staff from gathering elsewhere.
- Develop a plan for continuity of education. Consider in that plan how to also continue nutrition and other services provided in the regular school setting to establish alternate mechanisms for these services to continue.
- Maintain regular communications with the local public health department.

Will truancy limits (10% of missed days) remain the same in event that a student is sent home for a minimum of 14 days due to COVID-19 exposure?

An absence of this type will not count towards truancy. Students with needs for extended absences will be placed on an Off Campus Independent Study (OCIS) contract.

Will students sent home due to COVID-19 exposure move to the virtual learning academy temporarily until it is safe for them to return, or permanently?

No. These students will not be enrolled into the Virtual Learning Academy. They will continue with the work assigned from their in-person teacher via an OCIS contract.

What happens to learning and teaching if an entire classroom or school needs to close?

The teachers and students would transition into an online learning model. PUSD will have a plan and teacher training in place for this scenario. This would be different from PUSD's Virtual Learning Academy. Students would remain with their on campus teacher. This online learning would be very different from our emergency distance learning. Components of the Virtual Learning Academy would be shared and incorporated, including one consolidated learning platform and direct instruction. PUSD will incorporate training for on campus teachers so that they have the tools to be ready to shift online.

What if a family member that lives in the same home with a student or staff member tests positive for COVID?

Please review the chart provided by the CDPH, which describes what measures should be taken [here](#) on page 3.

I would really like my student to return to a normal school day on campus; however, I am also worried he/she may contract COVID-19. What assurances do I have as a parent that every precaution will be taken to ensure my child's safety specific to this virus?

PUSD will follow the [COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School Based Programs](#) guidelines and the San Diego County Health orders to the greatest extent possible to ensure safety for our students and staff.

What precautions will be taken for issuing food services on campus? What meal options will be provided for online learners?

Staggered lunch times will be developed through the site specific logistic planning to reduce the number of students at lunch time and implement physical distancing wherever possible. Hand sanitizer stations will be located near food service areas to support personal hygiene. Students participating in the Virtual Learning Academy can pick up meals at school and regular meal prices will apply as we reopen schools. Virtual Learning schedules will allow for time for breakfast/lunch pick up; we are looking into allowing for one pick up for multiple meals to reduce the number of trips to campus.

What precautions will be taken for ensuring disinfection of surfaces on buses?

Frequent disinfecting of buses and implementing safety protocols will ensure the health and safety of students that utilize District transportation. Additionally, the air conditioning will be on, and windows or roof ventilation will be open to maximize ventilation during transport. All buses have one or two large roof ventilation hatches which allow for air to be scooped in from the back and vacuumed out from the rear roof or hatch open windows in the back. As stated above, all students will be required to wear masks when riding PUSD transportation, unless exempt.

Frequently Asked Questions: STUDENT LEARNING AND SCHEDULES

In Person Learning:

What would be the class size for on-campus learning?

Class size and ability to physically distance will be dependent on the number of families choosing each option. Classrooms will utilize space by spreading desks and tables around the room, as well as using vacant classrooms and outdoor space, as available. In person class sizes may be smaller depending on how many students have chosen the Virtual Learning Academy, but schools are developing contingency plans to further reduce the number of students to ensure physical distancing. This may include staggered start times, for example, and AM and PM group.

Will in person learning be 5 days per week with on campus learning?

Our goal is to have students on campus five days a week.

Will students need to refrain from physical contact with their teachers and peers?

We will be following the physical distancing guidelines per the most current health order as most feasible. Changes will be made to eliminate sharing of instructional materials such as markers, pencils, and manipulatives. However, we also recognize the need for social connection and interaction. Parents should speak and work with their children about maintaining appropriate physical distance and boundaries and the importance of wearing a mask when physical distance is not possible.

What will lunch and recess look like?

School schedules will be developed to reduce numbers of students in common areas during breaks, lunches and reduce large gatherings as feasible. An example would be: normally, at elementary, all primary students have a common recess. These will be adjusted to include one grade level at a time or separate play areas such as blacktop or field for specific grade levels. At middle and high school, designating areas for students during breaks will reduce large groups from gathering. We will be providing schools with decals to indicate spacing for any area where students may line up such as the lunch area.

Will sports and extra-curricular activities be permitted for the 2020-21 school year?

Students will have the option to participate in on-campus sports and extracurricular activities as available and allowable under public health orders. As high school athletics are governed by the California Interscholastic Federation, we will also be adhering to the guidelines set forth by the organization. CIF has delayed the start of high school athletics until December 2020 or January 2021.

Will music be provided in either on campus or virtual options?

Yes. We anticipate music being provided in both options. We are considering having virtual students join the on-campus music class virtually to participate.

The presentation mentions fostering a positive school environment. What does that mean?

Teachers and support staff build positive relationships and rapport with students based on trust and showing students that they are listening, interested in knowing more about the students. Staff is responsive to students' needs and check in with students on a regular basis. Teachers build classroom environments that are collaborative and with expectations for treating one another with mutual respect. Students are valued and have assets such as their lived experiences, language, culture, and identity that is honored.

Will training be provided to PTA/classroom volunteers regarding safety protocols?

Initially, visitors to campus will not be allowed. At some point, we would like to have volunteers and will be monitoring safety regulations in order to welcome volunteers back to the school. We all are working together to prevent illness and reduce the number of people on campus for physical distancing. There will be training to ensure volunteers are able to return once physical distancing regulations ease up.

Will it be up to each site Principal to decide on volunteers? My school runs Art Corps with volunteers and funding by PTSA. Should PTSA assume this program isn't allowed for this school year?

Initially, visitors to campus will not be allowed. Allowing visitors will be a phased approach to the reopening and based on current safety regulations for physical distancing.

Virtual Learning Academy:

Why are we not using a hybrid model?

A blended or hybrid model was considered. However, it was determined not feasible due to the impact of human and financial resources that would be required. There is simply not enough staff to implement this option nor to provide the instructional time needed if students are attending on alternating days. Additionally, bringing students to campus part-time still exposes them to other students, so the health reasons for keeping them home are defeated.

Several nearby school districts, after considering hybrid models, ultimately decided not to offer hybrid models due to the same fiscal and logistical challenges we are encountering.

How is the Virtual Learning Academy going to be different from Distance Learning?

Distance learning is very different from the Virtual Learning Academy. Distance learning was an emergency response to the school closures, with limited live instruction and a temporary move to credit/no credit. Input from teachers, students, and parents have contributed to dramatic changes for PUSD's Virtual Learning Academy. Virtual learning will adhere to a daily learning bell schedule, have one common learning management platform, with letter grades and daily attendance, and significantly more teacher-facilitated interaction and direct teaching of rigorous standards-based content.

How did the District create the Virtual Learning Academy schedules?

Our team reviewed sample schedules from several schools that had successful virtual learning models. We also leaned on the current research for best practices as we designed class schedules. Sample schedules will be shared on our website later this week.

If we choose the Virtual Learning Academy, are we still enrolled in our home school and will we retain the same quarter/trimester schedule?

Any student enrolled in the Virtual Learning Academy would still retain their enrollment (and transcripts) to their current physical school. But their schedule may differ from their current physical school. For example, high school students, no matter if their regular school is on a trimester or quarter system, would be switching to a 4x4 schedule for the duration of the Virtual Learning Academy. This allows for more flexibility for students who would like to either accelerate or catch up, with the option to take more or fewer classes to meet students' needs.

Will there be a separate class of students or a separate teacher to provide instruction for the students in virtual learning?

Yes, there will be Virtual Learning teachers assigned to the students through the PUSD Virtual Learning Academy. While our goal is to keep students and teachers together from the same schools, due to staff and class availability, the students in a virtual classroom may be from multiple schools in PUSD. The teacher may also be from a different school than your home school. The teacher placement will be based on who is best qualified as well as their credential and subject specialty.

Will secondary students have to resubmit their course request forms (CRFs)?

Schools will do their best to honor the CRFs, as they create their master schedules. Even in normal times, students don't always get the courses they request, but every effort will be made.

Will there be P.E. in the Virtual Learning Academy?

Yes, the Virtual Learning Academy will have specific P.E. classes for all students.

During the last months, the online classes were not very successful for some teachers, with technical issues affecting the lesson quality.

We will work with our teachers in the Virtual Learning Academy to ensure that they have the training and all the technical knowledge and issues addressed so that our students have a high quality experience.

Can we assure families that if they will pick up the online option, all technical issues are sorted out and lessons will flow as planned?

We will have job-aides and support for families to ensure students are successful by reducing any technical issues. We also plan on providing families with parent meetings and Back to School Orientation.

Will there be any tangible learning materials provided to students in the virtual learning classes?

Yes. Just like we did with the laptop distribution process, we will coordinate a process for students to pick up their classroom materials, such as textbooks and supplies.

What if students have questions with the activities or recorded lessons in the Virtual Learning Academy?

There will be regular Office Hours, Homeroom, and opportunities for differentiated instruction each day for students to ask questions.

Is middle school similar to high school in the Virtual Learning Academy?

While there are similarities with the types of instructional formats and earning of grades, the curriculum is based on the unique California State Standards for each grade level and is developmentally, academically and socially appropriate for our students. The class schedule would also be different. For example, high school is a 4x4 schedule as it provides greater flexibility. The middle school schedule is a semester long, 6-period block schedule.

Is there an additional Independent Studies option?

Yes, New Directions is the independent study program in the Poway Unified School District and is connected to each PUSD school. New Directions is designed to provide students an opportunity to meet learning requirements independently from the regular classroom setting. Rather than daily instruction, parents/guardians are actively involved in the daily work completion and academic progress of their student, and each family determines the study hours that fit within the family's schedule. Independent study offers more flexibility, with a weekly appointment with an instructor, but not daily instruction. New Directions is on a semester schedule, with standardized testing and letter grades. Course selection, however, is limited. For example, Advanced Placement courses are not offered through this option. Students can participate in extracurricular activities at their schools, including clubs and athletics. Find out more [here](#).

Have you ever considered a hybrid just for high school?

Yes we considered it, but the sheer number of students at our high schools does not make the hybrid model a practical option, both from a facilities and staffing point of view. Meeting instructional minute requirements, with students alternating schedules, would also be extremely difficult.

I am really concerned about kids who don't have safe homes. Will you reach out to them?

Yes. We will work with our teachers and counselors to ensure we continue to make regular contact with all at-risk students.

How do we ensure that the students with the greatest needs (SDC, IEPs, 504s, victims of abuse, food insecure) are prioritized so their needs are met?

Our Youth in Transition program for homeless and foster youth, as well as our teachers, counselors, and administrators, will continue to reach out and make connections so that our individual students' needs are met.

Are the unions supportive of these changes?

We are working very closely with our employee bargaining groups to ensure our planning aligns.

Will time banking days continue for both on-campus and virtual learning pathways?

Yes. We value collaboration and planning time for our teachers, although the times and days may be adjusted.

How will you ensure the two pathways are equal in terms of academic progress and grading?

Both pathway options will be aligned with California standards, and student progress will be measured through assessments, feedback, and letter grades.

Frequently Asked Questions: FAMILY COMMITMENT SURVEY

When will PUSD be asking families to take the Family Commitment Survey?

The survey period has been pushed back due to feedback from families that they needed more time and information to decide.

The Family Commitment Survey is a key survey, for every family/student. How will the District send it out to families?

We will send the survey multiple times directly via email, text, and phone reminders, as well as websites and social media through all of our communication platforms.

What happens if a family is not committing to a choice? Is there a fallback/default choice?

The school site will send follow up communications to each family that has not responded. If they still do not make a commitment, they will be automatically placed in the in person on campus learning option.

Once the preferences are submitted, will families have the opportunity to make changes?

There will be a mid-year window for families to reassess their choice. The preference is for families to commit to a model for the initial half of the 2020-21 school year. However, we do want students to have successful experiences during this difficult time. Therefore, we will review requests for changes on a case-by-case basis. Any mid-term changes in program will be dependent on the availability of space and staffing.

High schools may allow greater flexibility to change from virtual to on campus based on their structure and schedules. However, elementary and middle schools may be more challenging due to classes being filled and seats not being available at a family's home school.

Does the District have a hope of the desired amount of students who choose virtual learning vs on campus?

The latest parent survey indicated ___% families would choose the Virtual Learning Academy, ___% would choose an alternative (PUSD homeschool or independent study), and ___% would choose on campus learning.