

Dear Los Angeles Unified Family,

We are excited to welcome you back to campus for the 2022-2023 school year.

We know that COVID-19 is here to stay. As we have entered into a new phase of this virus where we have accessible at-home testing, vaccinations for COVID-19 and therapeutics available for treatment, Los Angeles Unified is able to nimbly adjust to changing conditions.

In collaboration with our science advisors at UCLA, we are monitoring the following:

- **Rates of in-school transmission of COVID-19.** Our goal is to ensure all students have access to in-person learning in the safest environment possible. Beyond just positivity rates, monitoring COVID-19 transmission that occurs within classrooms is our best indicator of safety in schools.
- **Seasonal patterns of respiratory viruses.** We will monitor any concerning trends, including absences, related to respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19, to quickly respond and mitigate community spread.

In preparation for the new school year and in alignment with the July 29, 2022 guidance from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Los Angeles Unified is committed to implementing the following safety procedures:

- **Masking:** Indoor masking is strongly recommended at all Los Angeles Unified schools and workplaces.
  - All schools have surgical masks available for distribution upon request to any student or employee.
- **Response Testing:** Similar to our summer school programs, Los Angeles Unified is implementing a “response testing” protocol during the 2022-2023 school year using at-home rapid antigen tests.
  - The California Department of Public Health recommends that “*antigen tests be considered the primary option for detecting COVID-19 in schools, compared to PCR tests.*” The antigen test provides rapid results for those individuals who have virus levels that are high enough to transmit the virus. The PCR tests have a high level of sensitivity and can pick up low levels of the virus both before and after infection. This may cause students to unnecessarily miss school with low levels of the virus despite being asymptomatic and not being a risk to transmit to others. Therefore, the antigen tests will help to ensure that every child has access to in-person learning while maintaining a safe school environment.
  - Weekly asymptomatic COVID-19 testing is no longer required.
  - Testing will only be required for those experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or those who have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive.
  - Symptomatic students and close contacts will be provided with an at-home rapid antigen test by their school.

- Students who become symptomatic or ill while at school are required to wear a mask while being treated at the health office and waiting to be picked up by a parent/guardian. School administrators will provide a rapid antigen test kit for the symptomatic student to take home.
  - If parents have questions they can call their school site or the Family Help Desk at (213) 443-1300.
- **Back to School Rapid Antigen Testing:** Antigen at-home rapid tests will be distributed to all students and staff and should be used within 48 hours prior to entering campus for the first day of school. We will also be distributing antigen at-home rapid tests at the end of the first week of school. All students and staff should also take a rapid test within 48 hours prior to the start of the second week of school.
  - If an individual tests positive on a rapid antigen test, please upload the result onto the Daily Pass.
  - If your child has symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, cough, congestion, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea, please keep your child at home. Your child must take an at-home rapid test and can return to school if the test is negative, when symptoms have improved and your child is fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours.
  - Based on differences in testing distribution across school sites, your principal will provide information about how you can access rapid tests between August 8 through August 12, and throughout the school year.
- **Daily Pass:** The Daily Pass will continue to be used to upload COVID-19 rapid antigen test results and vaccination records, monitor positive cases and to notify close contacts of a person who has tested positive.
  - Students and employees do not need to generate a Daily Pass QR code to enter school campuses.
- **Vaccination:** Our employees are already vaccinated. We encourage all eligible students to be vaccinated as well, and all members of the school community to receive any boosters for which they are eligible.
- **Positive Cases:** Individuals who test positive must isolate at home and may be released from isolation on Day 6, provided symptoms are improving, they are fever-free for the past 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and have a negative test result from a rapid antigen test taken on or after Day 5 and upload results to Daily Pass.
  - If the individual is asymptomatic, Day 0 of isolation is the day the individual was tested. Day 1 is the first full day following the day the individual was tested.
  - If the individual is symptomatic, Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset, regardless of when the individual tested positive. Day 1 is the first full day following the day that symptoms started.
  - *Employees* eligible for shortened isolation must continue to wear a highly protective mask at all times in the workplace around others, except when eating or drinking, for 10 days after the date of the positive test.

- *Students* ending isolation early are strongly recommended to wear a highly protective mask when around others, except when eating or drinking, for 10 days after the date of the positive test.
- **Close Contacts:** Student close contacts, regardless of vaccination status, and employee close contacts, regardless of booster status, can remain at school or work following exposure to a positive case as long as they monitor for symptoms and remain asymptomatic, wear a highly protective mask at all times indoors (except when eating or drinking) for 10 days following the last date of exposure and test negative with a rapid antigen test between 3-5 days after last date of exposure.
- **COVID Dashboards:** The COVID dashboards will continue in the 2022-2023 school year. Rapid antigen tests will be the primary method for response testing and will be reflected on the dashboards. If PCR tests are uploaded into the Daily Pass, those will also be reflected on the dashboards.
- **Meals:** Los Angeles Unified will maximize use of outdoor spaces for meals. Your child's school will have additional information on how they are utilizing outdoor space to keep our students safe.
  - Los Angeles Unified will offer breakfast for students at the start of the school year. In the event students in a classroom are required to wear masks, other breakfast location arrangements will be made.

As we continue to provide a safe and healthy learning environment at every school, preparations include enhanced, comprehensive sanitizing efforts and increased ventilation on school campuses to achieve the highest safety standards, including:

- Disinfection of all high-touch surfaces twice daily.
- HVAC systems programmed to support increased air ventilation even when heating or cooling is not required. These fans are operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Los Angeles Unified unveiled the nation's largest school-based air monitoring network, the "Know Your Air Network," which includes the installation of sensors at 200 school locations Districtwide.
  - The network provides students, parents, teachers and the community with important real-time data about their local outdoor air quality.
- \$2 million, one-time purchase of electrostatic disinfecting units.
  - Units are deployed nightly to disinfect all administrative areas, classrooms and support spaces.
- \$71 million annual investment in additional, intensive custodial support to disinfect all spaces nightly.
- \$700,000 additional annual investment in cleaning and disinfecting supplies to target COVID-19 related safety.
- \$20 million annual investment in maintaining upgraded air filtration systems.
  - The District maintains an ample supply of MERV-13 filters and will continue to bulk purchase units to avoid any future supply shortages or disruptions. We currently have enough filters for this school year.
  - The District has increased the frequency of filter inspection and over 115,000 air filters in schools Districtwide are inspected on a monthly basis

and replaced as necessary due to the higher rate of particulate capture of the high-performance MERV-13 filters.

- \$1.7 million investment in 1,750 portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) scrubber units for rapid deployment to any affected space where an HVAC service call has been initiated.
  - The District has done testing to validate the effectiveness of air scrubbers, which provide the same high-level of filtration as our MERV 13 air ventilation systems.
  - Air scrubbers are deployed in high density areas and areas with multiple-related positive cases.

For more information on our safety protocols, please visit [achieve.lausd.net/covid](https://achieve.lausd.net/covid)