

PIEDMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education  
FROM: Randall Booker, Superintendent  
DATE: January 12, 2022  
RE: **COVID Update**

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I. **SUPPORT INFORMATION**

***Superintendent Announcements***

There are persistent rumors and speculation that PUSD is planning to close schools due to the ongoing surge in COVID-19 cases. To be clear, there are no plans or discussions to close schools. To the contrary, the District has comprehensive plans to keep students and staff in school to the greatest extent possible while protecting the health of the entire school community. As outlined below, these plans include a robust testing program, requiring n95 or kn95 masks for educators (1/11 - 1/21), and contingency staffing plans to meet the challenges of the current surge. Baseless rumors and speculation about school closures create uncertainty, if not anxiety, and I want to reassure the community that the District is dedicated to keeping our schools open and safe.

***Vaccination Rates***

PUSD Families and Students have submitted proof of vaccination against COVID at a phenomenal rate. **95% of District students are vaccinated against COVID-19.**

<i>School Name</i>	Yes	#N/A	Grand Total	Percentage
Beach Elementary School	240	24	264	90.91%
Havens Elementary School	397	36	433	91.69%
Millennium High School	54	2	56	96.43%
Piedmont High School	818	5	823	99.39%
Piedmont Middle School	484	16	500	96.80%
Piedmont Preschool	0	4*	4*	0.00%*
Wildwood Elementary School	241	20	261	92.34%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2234</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>95.43%</b>

\* not age eligible for the vaccine

### ***Online COVID Case-Rate Tracker***

The District has not updated its COVID-19 case dashboard since the start of Winter Break. There were a large number of COVID-19 cases that occurred during the Break and that are still being reported to the District. A complicating factor is that this information has been reported to the District through a range of emails and voicemails to a range of different District staff, and on the school attendance lines.

This information will change in coming days as we continue to receive and verify information:

- December 17, 2021 - January 10, 2022, the District was notified of roughly 228 cases of COVID-19 within the school community.
- The majority of these 228 cases – roughly 190 – were reported to the District before students and staff returned to school on January 5, 2022.

### ***Isolation Revisions***

Throughout the pandemic, public health guidance has been evolving. During our Winter Break, the CDC issued new COVID-19 guidelines, and the State and County are continuing to update it's own guidance and materials for K-12 schools to reflect these changes. In summary:

- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 are required to stay home for a minimum of five days.
- If no symptoms are present or symptoms are resolving, the District will offer to administer a Rapid Antigen test on or after day six. If negative on or after day six, the individual may return to school the same day.

This COVID-19 testing *for students* is *by appointment only* and scheduled by the site Health Clerks only.

As the public health guidance changes, I will continue to update the community.

### ***Testing Program***

Anticipating the surge in COVID-19 cases, the District developed testing opportunities for students and staff which have proven invaluable given the limited availability of testing.

- The District distributed roughly 2600 kits, each containing two tests for *asymptomatic* students and school staff to self-test prior to returning to school in January. These tests helped identify many of the 190 cases mentioned above.
- Starting on January 4 – the day before the start of school – the District began offering on-site Rapid Antigen testing to clear *symptomatic* and *post-symptomatic* students and staff to return to school. This, too, has helped identify positive cases before returning to campus. This “clearance” testing is now offered each school day:

- 7:00 am - 8:00 am (M-F);
- 10:00 am - 11:15 am (M-F);
- 2:15 pm - 3:15 pm (W only); and
- 4:30 pm - 5:15 pm (M, T, Th).

These times may be subject to change due to staffing, and student testing is by appointment only and scheduled by the site Health Clerks only.

Beach	Nadia Marquez	nmarquez@piedmont.k12.ca.us
Havens	Kristen Huey	khuey@piedmont.k12.ca.us
Wildwood	Kylie Bennett	kbennett@piedmont.k12.ca.us
PMS	Daniel Ladu	dladu@piedmont.k12.ca.us
PHS & MHS	Devanie White	dwhite@piedmont.k12.ca.us
District	Sara Valkonen	sjennyvalkonen@piedmont.k12.ca.us

- With the goal of starting next week, the District will start offering weekly PCR testing for all students and staff. If they haven't already done so, it is critical that families register their students with Primary Health. If already registered, there is no need to do it a second time.

### ***District Systems***

Over the last (nearly) two years, the District has been building systems to meet the challenges of COVID-19. We have a strong team of Nurses and Health Clerks, and systems for tracking positive cases and those who are symptomatic, exposed, or in quarantine. We are now adapting these systems to meet the challenges of the current surge in cases.

- ***Daily Health Screener*** If your student has symptoms consistent with or tests positive for COVID-19, please report this through the Daily Health Screener. Due to an extremely high volume of emails and voicemails, please do NOT report this information in emails to school Nurses or Health Clerks, or call our staff on their personal cell phones.
- ***Response*** Due to the large volume of work, it may take 24-48 hours for District staff to respond to information reported through the Screener, and staff will use more written notifications concerning isolation and quarantine and fewer phone calls. Thank you for your patience, grace and flexibility, as our Nurses and Health Clerks are handling a breathtaking volume of inquiries and responding as quickly as they are able.

- **Health Clerks** With funding support from the City, the District is looking to hire two additional health clerks to assist with COVID-19 testing, to make the schools as safe as possible and avoid unnecessary absences. If anyone in the community is interested, please contact Kim Randlett at [KRandlett@piedmont.k12.ca.us](mailto:KRandlett@piedmont.k12.ca.us). No experience necessary.

### ***How the Community Can Help***

Here's how you can help us keep the schools open:

- Get your students vaccinated and boosted. This is the most effective way to protect students and the entire school community from COVID-19.
- Complete the Daily Health Screener every school day.
- If your student has symptoms consistent with or tests positive for COVID-19, report this through the Daily Health Screener.
- Make sure your student has a well-fitting, high-filtration mask (KN95 or N95) and wears it appropriately when masking is required or recommended.
- If you are willing to be a substitute teacher or substitute aide, please contact Kim Randlett at [krandlett@piedmont.k12.ca.us](mailto:krandlett@piedmont.k12.ca.us). If you have ever thought about doing this, now is the time. Governor Newsom has just made the substitute hiring process simpler, and we can use your help!

## **II. RECOMMENDATION: ANNOUNCEMENT**

No action required by the Board. For announcement purposes only.