



P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 10, 2020

Contact: Kerri Schuette, Public Information Officer, (530) 245-7383

SCHOOLS, PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNER TO HELP SCHOOLS REOPEN

SHASTA COUNTY – Schools will reopen this week – some in person, some through distance learning, and some in a hybrid – and school districts and Shasta County Public Health have been working together to ensure a safe return.

“Education is essential for our children’s well-being, and our school partners have worked hard to come up with plans that balance the need for education with student safety. For schools that opted to come back to campus in person, we are grateful for their efforts to welcome children back with safety modifications to reduce risk to staff and students,” said Dr. Karen Ramstrom, Shasta County Health Officer.

Each of the county’s school districts decided on its return plan, with some choosing distance learning, others opting for a 5-day-a-week return to school, and others selecting a hybrid of in-person and distance learning.

The Shasta County Office of Education has released its updated “School Year Planning: A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19.” This guide will help parents and students prepare for what school will look like this academic year, including daily precautions that families should take on days their children will be on campus, how sports and physical education will be adapted, what will happen if there are cases of COVID-19 in a school, and more. A section regarding students with underlying health conditions and other needs is included. The California Department of Public Health has also released updated guidance for schools and school-based programs and supplementary FAQs. These documents are available at www.ShastaReady.org.

School districts have all created plans to minimize risk for students and staff returning to school in a variety of ways, including physical distancing, mask-wearing and having children remain in cohorts for the classroom, meals and physical activity. Fortunately, studies have indicated that children do not spread COVID-19 as readily as adults do, and the risk of child-to-child and child-to-adult transmission is low in children under age 12. The risk of infection and serious illness is also comparatively low among elementary school children. Simple prevention measures like staying home when sick, wearing face coverings, physical distancing and frequent handwashing greatly reduce the risk of transmitting COVID, especially when done in combinations.

“School will not look the same this year, but over time, we will all get used to the modifications,” Dr. Ramstrom said.

Schools that have opted to return to campus may need to take a step back if the county ends up on the state’s monitoring list. If this happens, schools will not be required to close; rather, staff surveillance testing plans will be augmented.

For more information on preparing your children for the return to school, go to www.ShastaReady.org and select “Frequently Asked Questions.” More information about your individual school’s reopening plan is available through your school.