



December 29, 2021

Dear ESUSD Families,

As we enter our second week of winter recess, I hope your family is enjoying the holidays and all are safe and healthy. With the recent surge in COVID-19 cases, El Segundo Unified School District remains steadfast in our commitment to follow all recommended mitigation efforts and practices that keep our students and staff safe and attending school in-person.

I would like to provide you some health and safety updates to ensure we have a smooth return to school. Our collective efforts absolutely make a difference and I am confident that we can continue to do so through the winter season. In a telebriefing with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health yesterday, officials stated they want everyone back in schools in January but will likely have to tighten up requirements in some areas related to upgrading masks and increased testing. I anticipate a new health order will be issued next week with the specific changes, and ESUSD will communicate any school related changes with you promptly thereafter.

**Testing:**

Given the high transmission level of the Omicron variant, we are strongly encouraging students to secure a COVID test prior to returning to campus on Monday, January 3, 2022. As you may have heard, the State is attempting to distribute home COVID tests for students prior to the resuming of school on Monday. However, I have been informed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education that the take-home test kits for students have not arrived and an arrival date has yet to be confirmed.

When these take-home COVID tests become available, we will notify families immediately regarding distribution. For now, here are several potential options for testing:

- <https://covid19.lacounty.gov/testing/>
- <https://covid19.ca.gov/>
- Your health care provider
- Local CVS/pharmacy stores
- Some local urgent care facilities
- An at-home COVID test

A negative test is not required for students and staff to return to school January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, but in the event your child exhibits any flu-like or cold symptoms, your child should get tested AND remain at home.

**Masks:**

Masks continue to be required indoors and the upcoming health order change will likely require masking in crowded outdoor spaces, especially in those instances where physical distancing is not possible.

Masks help protect us against getting and spreading COVID-19. Choose a mask:

- 1) That fits snugly against your nose and chin with no large gaps around the sides of the face or your nose, AND

- 2) That you will be comfortable wearing, AND
- 3) Knowing that a likely new requirement is that the mask should have three or more layers of tightly woven or non-woven material.

You get more protection from a mask the tighter it fits and the more it filters the air. Examples of how you can get better protection include if you:

- Improve how well your mask fits and filters by [double masking](#) (i.e., wearing a cloth face mask over a surgical mask).
- Use an N95 or KN95 respirator, as long as it fits well, and you can tolerate it.

Masks are available at schools for students during the school day.

### **Short-term Independent Study**

Should you have concerns about having your child return to school at this time, the only option to consider is short-term independent study for the duration(s) of five days. Requests should be submitted to the school site clerical staff who will inform your child's teacher of the request. Please allow time for the teacher to prepare the packet of work that can be picked up and worked on independently at home. Note that the State removed the flexibility which allowed school districts to offer the hybrid instruction option that was in effect last year.

### **Closing Remarks**

Please strongly consider securing a COVID test before Monday, and please continue to strictly adhere to the daily health screening questions when we return to campuses on Monday. We also ask that all positive COVID results be reported as soon as possible to your school site principal in order for us to ensure proper contact tracing and all related efforts occur to mitigate spread.

It is important to note that at this time there is no indication from the county, state, or national officials that schools will shift back entirely to distance learning. **I can assure you that ESUSD's priority remains keeping our schools open for in-person instruction, and to do this safely.**

We will continue to update you if the situation changes. Thank you in advance for your efforts to help us ensure that our schools remain as safe as possible when our students and staff resume school on Monday, January 3, 2022.

With Gratitude,

*Melissa Moore, Ed.D.*

*Superintendent*

*El Segundo Unified School District*