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Quality education and opportunity for all students to succeed

August 13, 2021

Dear Families and Staff of San Ysidro School District,

We have now successfully and safely completed our 3rd week of school! The joy and excitement of our students being able to return to full in person school has been amazing! A very special thanks to our SYSD who have worked countless hours to ensure our schools safely open this fall for students. We also extend gratitude to our students and families for their commitment and excellence to adhering to the school safety protocols so we can keep our schools open this school year.

Our district's COVID Safety Plan was updated prior to the opening of our schools to reflect the California Department of Public Health's most rigorous COVID safety guidance for schools. The district's multi-layered safety standards include protocols such as access to vaccination clinics, masks, rapid antigen COVID testing, contact tracing, temperature checks, hand washing and disinfection, and significant financial investment in an upgraded and advanced air filtration system which rapidly eliminates COVID, and more.

Within the first 3 weeks of school **0.6% (or less than 1%)** of our total student and staff population of just over 5,000 have reported a positive COVID case. The overwhelming majority of these COVID cases have been contact traced to outside community transmission, and not from transmission within our schools. Positive cases are immediately followed up with contact tracing in partnership with the county health department, and sanitation and disinfection of the classroom or location using specialized virus killing products. To date, no COVID outbreak has occurred in any of our schools or facilities.

I am proud to share that the Southern Region of San Diego County, which includes San Ysidro and Otay Mesa, has the highest vaccination rate in the county! As of August 10th, the San Diego County Health Department reported that **91.6% of all 12+ and older have had at least one dose of the vaccine**. The collective humanitarian efforts that our District has engaged in with our elected officials, local organizations and community have helped to protect our children, families, and educators. Also, over the next few weeks our district will develop a plan to comply with the state's new health order which requires all educators to either show proof of vaccination or engage in weekly COVID testing if unvaccinated. Fortunately, our district was one of the first in the county to have access to vaccines for educators, thus, the majority of our SYSD team was vaccinated prior to this new school year starting.

While currently our county health department does not require masks in outdoor areas within schools, **our district asks families to strongly consider wearing masks when dropping off or picking up your child from school during the COVID delta variant surge.** If you remain in your vehicle during drop off and pick up, then masks are optional. Wearing masks at our schools is effective in helping to curb the transmission of COVID and to ensure our staff, students and families feel safe.

The multi-layered COVID safety precautions our district has implemented are proving to be highly effective in helping our students and staff stay safe. Our number one priority is the safety of our students and staff.

Thank you SYSD colleagues, families, and students for your commitment to safety by doing such a great job adhering to the safety protocols so our schools may remain open for our students!

Sincerely,

Gina Potter, Ed.D.
Superintendent