

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Napa County Schools and the California Blueprint for a Safer Economy *September 3, 2020*

When will Napa County Schools Reopen for In-Person Instruction?

- Napa County public schools are currently open for full distance learning and staff is available to support students and families.
- Napa County was categorized by the Blueprint in the Substantial (red) category on 8/31/20. The Blueprint indicates that counties in the Substantial (red) category may reopen to in-person instruction after 14 days.
- Currently the Napa County Office of Education (NCOE) and the public school districts in Napa County have not announced a date to begin in-person learning.
- All districts and schools are assessing the requirements and will be making decisions that prioritize the safety of staff and students, as well as students' academic and social/emotional needs.

What is The California Blueprint for a Safer Economy?

- On August 28 Governor Gavin Newsom announced that California was adopting a new COVID-19 pandemic plan, called "[The Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#)", to manage how and when the economy could reopen. As part of the new plan, schools are able to reopen for in-person instruction once their county has been in the Substantial (red) tier for at least two weeks.
- When the Blueprint activated on August 31 Napa County was categorized in the Substantial (red) category. Napa County will remain in the red for at least three weeks. Therefore, schools are eligible to reopen on September 14 or thereafter. All California County COVID-19 data is evaluated weekly, and if the situation in Napa County changes we could be moved to a different tier in the plan on September 22.
- At this time Napa County schools are assessing phased in-person reopening plans for implementation sometime after September 14. Currently the Napa County Office of Education (NCOE) and the public school districts in Napa County have not announced a date to begin in-person learning.

What are the state requirements for allowing schools to reopen for in-person instruction?

- Every county in California is assigned to a tier based on its rate of new cases and positivity percentage. The new system contains four tiers: purple (widespread risk level), red (substantial risk level), orange (moderate risk level), and yellow (minimal risk level).
- Schools in the purple tier aren't permitted to reopen for in-person instruction, unless they receive a waiver from their local health department for TK-6 grades.
- Schools may reopen for in-person instruction once their county has been in the red tier for at least two weeks.

Will all Napa County school campuses reopen for in-person instruction on September 14?

- No. Currently the public school districts in Napa County have not announced a date to begin in-person learning.
- Each of the five public school districts and private schools in Napa County is responsible for developing and implementing its own reopening plan.
- Napa County schools are carefully considering the safety of staff and students, and the varied and individualized needs of students and families.
- Most schools and districts have previously adopted plans for a hybrid or full distance learning model for the semester. Some may choose to continue with full distance learning for the time being to assess the implementation of plans, negotiate with labor partners and make other arrangements as needed.
- Schools that choose to reopen must follow the [California Department of Public Health Guidance](#) and the [Napa County Office of Education Considerations for Reopening Schools During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). Both are available online.

Will schools have to close if the county moves into the widespread/purple tier? Once a school is open, what other reasons would cause it to be closed?

- Schools that have reopened for in-person learning under the red tier will NOT be required to close if the county moves into the purple tier, provided that the following California Department of Public Health criteria are met:
- School closure may be appropriate when there are multiple cases in multiple cohorts at a school or when at least 5% of the total number of teachers/student/staff are cases within a 14-day period, depending on the size and physical layout of the school.
- A superintendent should close a school district if 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days, and in consultation with the local public health department. Districts may typically reopen after 14 days, also in consultation with local public health.
- The local public health officer may also determine school closure is warranted for other reasons, including results from public health investigation or other local epidemiological data.

What is the role of the Napa County Office of Education in reopening schools?

- NCOE functions to provide resources and support districts and student programming, as well as following state and local guidelines. NCOE does not order closures or reopening of schools.

What can families do now?

- Schools are open and staff is available. Distance learning has launched across the county.
- Napa County's highly qualified and dedicated school staff have trained, collaborated and made remarkable adjustments to teaching methods and curriculum to better fit a virtual distance learning model.
- Families can reach out for support. Contact your child's teacher or your school or district office.
- Academic resources and support as well as technology equipment are available.

What can families expect next?

- California's new Blueprint is a radical change from the previous County Monitoring List.
- All districts and schools are assessing the requirements and will be making decisions that prioritize the safety of staff and students, as well as students' academic and social/emotional needs.
- Some districts may soon or already have surveyed families for input.
- Families can check their child's school district website and communication channels for further announcements and information.