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To promote and protect the health and well-being of Kings County residents through education, prevention, and intervention.



PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN

Distance-Learning Waiver Process for California Schools (TK- 6th)

Date: August 6, 2020
Effective: 2020-2021 School Year

California schools have been closed for in-person instruction since mid-March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On July 17, 2020 Governor Gavin Newsom announced that, if a county has been on the State monitoring list within the prior 14 days, a school must conduct distance learning only, until the county has been off the monitoring list for at least 14 days. **Kings County is on the State's county monitoring list and must start the school year with distance learning consistent with the CDPH criteria.**

In counties on the monitoring list, the California Department of Public Health ("CDPH") guidance allows a district superintendent, private school principal/head of school, or executive director of a charter school to apply for a waiver from the local health officer to open an elementary school for in-person instruction. This waiver is applicable only for grades TK-6, even if the grade configuration at the school includes additional grades. Schools preparing to submit a waiver must consult with labor, parent and community organizations, and develop a re-opening plan consistent with CDPH School Re-opening Guidance.

Further, CDPH recommends that elementary schools within jurisdictions with 14-day case rates more than two times the threshold of the County Monitoring List (>200 cases/100,000 population) should not be considered for a waiver to re-open for in-person instruction. The current 14-day case rate in Kings County is 210.3 per 100,000. **Based on this, Kings County Department of Public Health (KCDPH) does not expect CDPH will approve waiver requests until the 14-day case rate drops below 200/100,000 and remains stable or continues a downward trend.**

KCDPH must consult with CDPH before approving a waiver application from a district or school. ***No waivers have been submitted or approved in Kings County at this time.***

Waivers will be reviewed by KCDPH and forwarded to CDPH on a case-by case basis, considering capacity to implement health and safety measures, local epidemiological data, testing capacity, and the extent to which the school/district has consulted with relevant labor, community and parent organizations. ***When a school waiver has been approved, it will be posted on the Kings County Website.***

For questions or more information, please call Darcy Pickens with Kings County Department of Public Health, 559-852-4438 or follow the links provided below.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/In-Person-Elementary-Waiver-Process.aspx>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Schools-FAQ.aspx>

<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-schools--en.pdf>